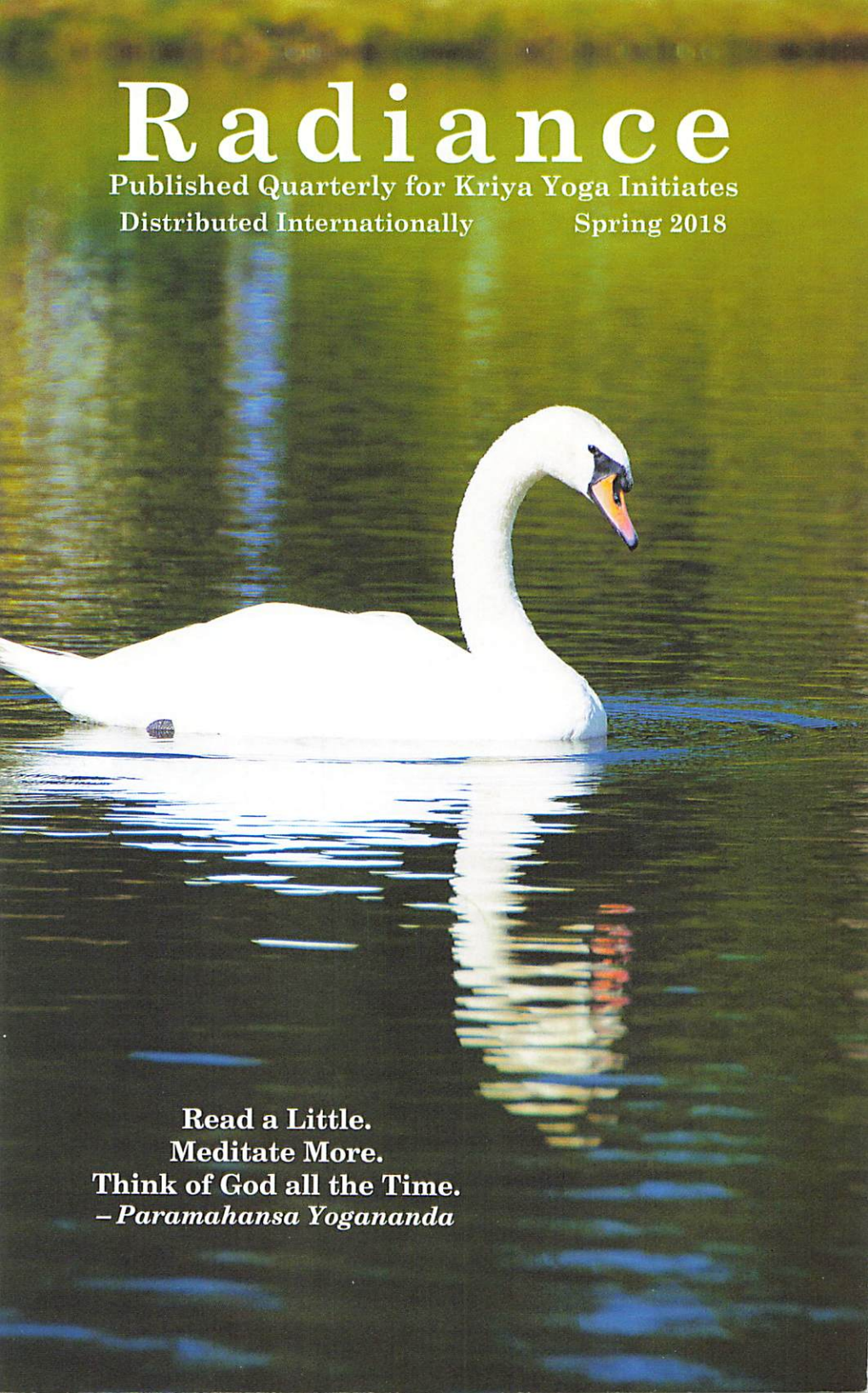
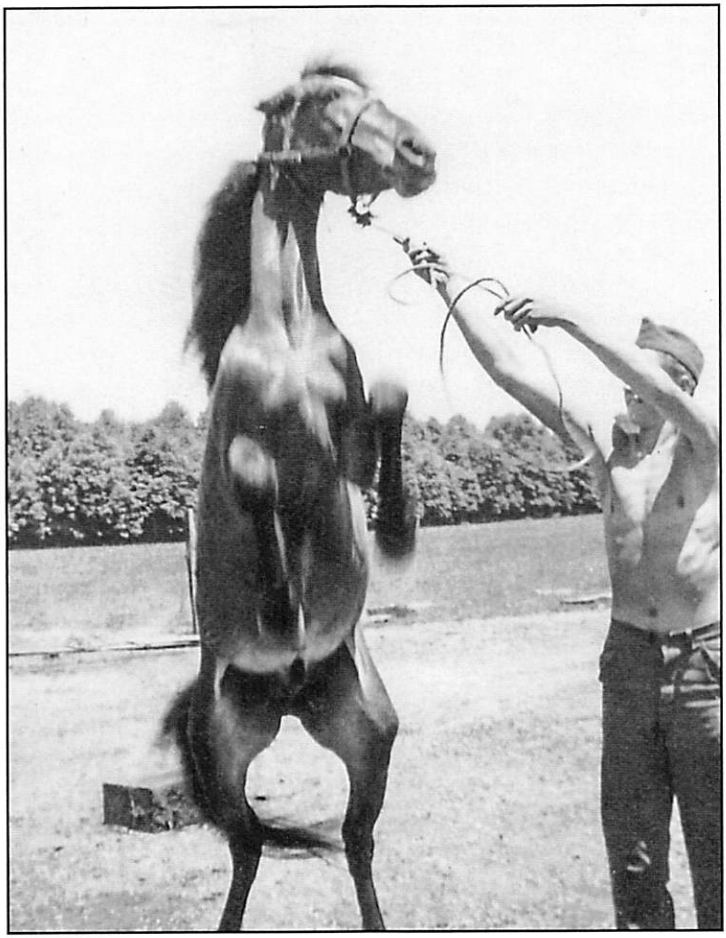
Radiance

Published Quarterly for Kriya Yoga Initiates
Distributed Internationally Spring 2018



Read a Little.
Meditate More.
Think of God all the Time.
– Paramahansa Yogananda



With my horse, Flash. *1947*

copyright 2018 © Center for Spiritual Awareness
Written by Roy Eugene Davis for initiates in the Kriya Yoga
tradition represented by Mahavatar Babaji, Lahiri Mahasaya,
Sri Yukteswar, Paramahansa Yogananda, and their successors.
Published quarterly. Subscription in the U.S. 1 year, $8.00.
Foreign $10.00, airmailed.
Center for Spiritual Awareness P. O. Box 7 Lakemont, Georgia 30552
Offices and Retreat Center on CSA Lane off Lake Rabun Road.
Tel: 706-782-4723 weekdays 8 a.m. – 3 p.m. Fax: 706-782-4560
For retreat reservations and book orders: info@csa-davis.org
To e-mail Roy Eugene Davis: rd@csa-davis.org
Web site: www.csa-davis.org

Meditate each day more deeply than you did the day before.
– Paramahansa Yogananda (1893 – 1952)

Awakening to Self-Realization

Wavelike movements and modifications in mind and awareness can be calmed by meditation and dispassionate nonattachment. Meditation is concentration on an object of attention. Meditation becomes firm and steady by persistent, devoted endeavor. Dispassionate nonattachment is renunciation [letting go of] cravings and instinctual urges. The most accomplished renunciation results from Self-realization that enables one to disregard and be free from the influences of the attributes of Nature.

– Patanjali's Yoga-Sutra 1:2–16

How human awareness is fragmented by wavelike movements in the mind and awareness and how to calm them is explained at the beginning of the first chapter of Patanjali's explanation of Kriya Yoga philosophical concepts and practices.

Intellectual discernment of our true nature and attentive meditation practice are of equal value. The first way results in having direct (without reliance on mental or emotional states) knowledge. The second way can result in direct experience that provides Self-knowledge.

Detaching attention from thoughts, memories, and feelings that blur awareness is the easiest way to renounce them. This is especially helpful when endeavoring to think rationally and when meditating.

Three attributes of Nature (*gunas*) influence the processes of Nature and physical, mental, and emotional conditions. 1) Purifying (*sattwic*) influences that can contribute to mental illumination, improved intellectual abilities, and clarity of awareness. 2) Inertia (*tamasic influence*) dulls the intellect and mind and distorts awareness and perceptions. 3) Movements (*rajasic influences)* in mind and awareness contribute to thinking but keep the mind active at other times. When these influences are disregarded and are not influential because we are established in awareness of our true nature, meditation is easy to experience and we can more easily be aware of our true nature.

Detachment of attention and awareness from conditions that interfere with intellectual discernment, rational thinking, concentration, and meditation can be done by choosing to do it. It can also occur when attention is fully engaged in purposeful actions such as when using a form or technique of meditation that requires that we be alertly attentive.

A helpful way to begin meditation is to observe flows of air that are inhaled and exhaled. Sit still, allow breathing to occur naturally and be aware of air coming into the entrance of the nostrils. Feel the sensation of coolness during inhalation and warmth when exhaling. Feel an equal flow of air coming in and going out both nostrils. When air flows with equal force through both nostrils, both hemispheres of the brain are more likely to be equally influential. Physical relaxation and mental alertness can then allow meditation to beneficially occur.

When still observing your breathing, after a while put your attention higher in the nasal pathway and feel the sensation that occurs then when you inhale and exhale. You may be more aware of your forehead and front region of the brain.

After a while, move your attention deeper into the throat and gently practice kriya pranayama. Feel a cool sensation moving upward through the spine with inhalation and warmth descending when exhaling.

Be aware of moments when breathing momentarily stops, usually after an exhalation. Don't restrain or hold the breath, just observe a natural pause in your breathing rhythm and be aware of the clarity of your awareness because thoughts have temporarily stopped.

After observing your breathing for a while, or using kriya pranayama, disregard the breath. Sit still, allowing meditation to flow naturally. Stay attentive. Notice subtle changes in your awareness as it becomes more clear.

The central astral (energy) channel in the spine is where to have attention and awareness during kriya pranayama. The Sanskrit name is *sushumna nadi*, the radiant path. Chakras or vital places in the spine are where two flows of prana ordinarily intersect or pass across. They are located at the base of the

spine, sacral region, lumbar, dorsal, and cervical regions. Above them is the so-called spiritual eye in the front region of the brain and the crown chakra in the higher brain associated with transcendence or pure awareness.

At all waking times when you aren't meditating, stay alert and observant to be aware of having useful insights and being more Self-aware. Spiritual awakening can continuously occur regardless of what you are doing.

Anticipate being more spiritually awake. Believe that you can and will be fully enlightened and expect to be enlightened. Don't allow thoughts or feelings of being unworthy of spiritual growth, having to repeatedly incarnate, work off a heavy load of karma, or wait for favorable planetary influences to assist you before you can be spiritually enlightened.

Don't wait until you have more time to devote to spiritual practices or until you retire from your work. Consider how you think and live as spiritual practice rather than separate your everyday life from your spiritual interests and practices.

While you are working or performing necessary or chosen duties, do everything skillfully without egocentric attachment to what you do or the results. Succeed in your endeavors and accomplish useful purposes enjoyably, then move on to doing more useful things.

When you awaken from restful sleep, be thankful to be alive, functional, know what is important, have limitless opportunities to learn, serve others, and awaken to Self-realization.

Cultivating awareness of consciously, joyously, existing will remind you that experiencing the transcendent state of pure awareness is the final stage of spiritual awakening with a mild degree of self-awareness. Complete transcendence, detachment from all relative conditions and from intellect and mind, is without a sense of independent self-awareness.

The Sanskrit word *kaivalya* indicates pure awareness beyond relative conditions. It is called "the great aloneness" because it is not supported by objects of perception such as thoughts or meditative experiences. Repeated experiences of it is Yoga, the Self-realization that is complete.

If such a transcendent experience is had when meditating, in the course of time, impulses arising from deep levels of your consciousness will activate your thoughts and bring you back to an ordinary state of consciousness. Transcendent experiences leave impressions (memories) in the subconscious level of mind that weaken and neutralize troublesome mental impressions. That is why it is recommended that frequent experiences of transcendent awareness be experienced. When gurus (spiritual teachers) tell disciples to practice Yoga, they mean "cultivate pure or transcendent superconsciousness."

Trying too hard to experience pure superconsciousness prevents success because the effort is too ego- (small sense of self) directed. We cannot rise above our confined sense of self by striving from that level of awareness. What is needed is withdrawal of attention and awareness from the small sense of self that allows awareness to be free. A shift of viewpoint from the sense of confinement to being unconfined usually occurs effortlessly and is often surprising. We are "there" without knowing how it happened. It is a spontaneous awakening rather than an effect of causative actions we perform.

Although such experiences cannot be caused by anything we do, attentive, *complete* Kriya Yoga practice can remove the obstacles to spontaneous spiritual awakening. Complete Kriya Yoga practice includes constructive thinking and living, study and use of powers of discrimination and meditation to discover the truth about our essence of being and ultimate Reality, and correction of the mistaken perception of self-identity.

> When your intellect is steady in profound meditation,
> disregarding flawed philosophical ideas and opinions,
> then shall you awaken to Self-realization.
> – *The Bhagavad Gita 2:53*

Paramahansa Yogananda 1893 – 1952
Circa late 1930s

Kriya Yoga Philosophy, Traditions, and Practices

Send questions or inquiries for possible use in a future issue by mail or e-mail rd@csa-davis.org

kriya Action, process, procedure, practice.

yoga A firm holding together of attention and awareness with one's pure essence. Preliminary yoga may be temporary identification with something perceived when meditating.

philosophy Word origin: Greek "love of wisdom." The study of ideas, cultures, people, the arts, and a wide variety of subjects and things for the purpose of acquiring knowledge.

traditions The transmission or passing on of ideas and various practices from one generation to another usually by oral transmission and personal association.

I prefer to meditate only, rather than try to use reason, intellect, or intuition to know my true nature and ultimate Reality. Is it all right to do this?

Even if meditation is your preferred practice, there will still be occasions when you think about spiritual matters and will want to intellectually understand them and intuitively know them. Do what seems to bring forth the best results for you. Be willing to experiment rather than firmly maintain an opinion or be strongly attached to habitual practices.

It is best to do what is most compatible with our capacity to practice and our psychological condition. Some people can meditate effectively. Others can meditate somewhat effectively but can also benefit from improving their powers of discriminative intelligence. Some are inclined to be more devotional.

Regardless of how we examine our essence and ultimate Reality, the purpose should be to awaken to permanent spiritual enlightenment. It can be done by aspiring to be spiritually enlightened and doing what can be done to remove conditions that confine and our awareness.

When wanting to meditate in Om, if I hear a variety of sounds, how can I know which one to listen to?

Subtle sounds that you hear are produced by your nervous system although some yogis say that some frequencies may be influenced by energies of the major chakras. Described as restless buzzing of bees at the base chakra; flute-like at the sacral chakra; like a harp at the lumbar chakra; a peal of a gong at the dorsal chakra; rolling thunder or ocean roar at the cervical chakra; Om at the spiritual eye and at the crown chakra until it is transcended.

Listen to sounds you hear until one of them is most evident, then use it as a mantra that attracts your attention and awareness. After being somewhat blended with it for a while, think of Om and its source—the aspect of ultimate Reality with three primary attributes, the energy influences (gunas). Then aspire to go beyond that to the pure essence of ultimate Reality. That pure essence is really at your innermost level of being because you are a unit of it.

When meditating in Om, the ideal is to have attention and awareness completely detached from everything that is not you as your real nature.

Do you have information about the Babaji in our Kriya Yoga lineage other than what is in Autobiography of Yogi*?*

Paramahansa Yogananda and other gurus in the lineage of our tradition have said that Babaji (respected spiritual father) prefers to be in seclusion to personally interact with a few of his spiritually advanced disciples and to influence and support others who are active in the world. The few claims of contact with him in recent years that have come to my attention are not believable. They are stories created to attract a following, sell books, or describe the fantasies of people who tell them.

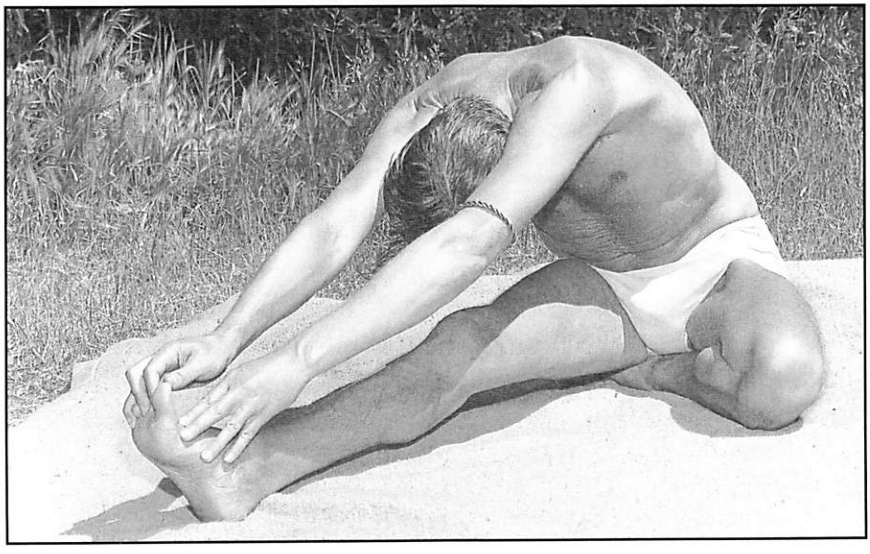
Lahiri Mahasaya advised his disciples not to seek Babaji in the Himalayas, but to complete their own spiritual awakening.

I have been using Kriya pranayama for several years. I can be mentally and emotionally calm but don't feel a flow of current in the spine. Can I do something to enable me to feel that flow?

Before using the technique, experiment with short inhalations a few times with your mouth partly open. Feel the cool sensation in your throat produced by the contact of air with the moisture in the throat and move that cool feeling to your spine. Then do your usual number of repetitions of kriya pranayama. Imagine and try to feel a cool sensation flowing up through the spine with inhalation and a warm, soothing feeling descending with exhalation. When the current actually flows you will feel a pleasurable sensation along with the coolness.

It might also be helpful to do maha mudra *(see picture below)* a few times just before meditating. If you have a Hatha Yoga session, doing maha mudra, the half-spinal twist, and the cobra pose will improve awareness of the spine and perhaps gently encourage energies to be more active in it.

Some people have told me that doing a tai chi or qi-Gong routine helped them be more aware of energy flows in the body and in the spine when they meditate. If energy flows are not felt, do kriya pranayama to be more inward when meditating and to calm the mind and clarify your awareness.



Comment on earth-time, dream-time, and absence of time. What is time like on other planets and in other universes? How old is our universe? Are all universes created or emanated at the same time? Do beings on other planets and in other universes age as we and things do on planet Earth?

Everyone perceives time differently. Some say it seems to move fast, to "fly" by, others say it seems to move slow, and others say it seems to sometimes "go by" fast and at other times "to drag." Some people who investigate time think it exists and flows and others say our awareness of changing events causes us to have an illusion of a sense of the passing of time. Some people have wondered if we travel backward or forward in time.

Plants and other living things which don't think are still subject to time. They begin, live for a while, and die. Evidence of past years is recorded in rocks and trees.

Time can be experienced in various ways when we dream. A dream of short duration may seem to require a longer period of dream-time to experience.

When we meditate or are intently concentrating we may seem to be outside of time or are not conscious of time. Events that are pleasant may seem to pass quickly while unpleasant events may seem to be much longer than they are.

The physicist Albert Einstein explained how perceptions of time may vary according to what is being experienced. "If you are kissing your sweetheart, an hour may seem like a few minutes. If you were to accidentally sit on a hot stove, a moment may seem like an hour."

I don't know how time is perceived on other planets or in other universes, in astral or other realms or dimensions, or if inhabitants (if there) age or change like aging and changes are observed on our planet.

Current estimates are that our universe emerged 10 to 20 billion earth-years ago and that our planet is about 4.5 billion years old. I only know about our space-time universe.

Some scientists think and talk about the possibility of other universes.

I have satisfying meditations. After meditation I soon become so involved in what I am doing and what is happening around me that I tend to forget to think and act like a spiritual being. How can I always be more Self-aware?

Consider everything you do as important spiritual practice. It will then be easier to always be Self-aware and aware that you exist in an infinite (limitless) ocean of consciousness like a bubble in a vast body of water. After meditation, it can be useful to read a few lines from the Bhagavad Gita, Yoga-Sutras, or another inspired book to nourish your mind with constructive ideas and provide something interesting to think about when you aren't concentrating completely on important actions or relationships.

The habit of forgetting or neglecting to be aware of our true nature and ultimate Reality can be corrected by being alertly conscious of what is important to us.

I am still having a mental contest regarding knowing ultimate Reality for what it is and being inclined to think, and want to believe, that God has personal humanlike characteristics, loves me, cares about me, and wants me to know and do his will. I have spiritual friends who endeavor to relate to God as a divine mother or are attracted to the idea that it might be helpful to pray or relate to so-called avatars: Krishna, Rama, and others. I don't want to do anything that is not spiritually beneficial, but also don't want to miss or avoid what might be beneficial.

You will have to work through or rise above your thoughts, feelings, and inclinations. When ultimate Reality is known as it is, all mistaken ideas and mental or emotional conflicts will cease to exist. Right, realized knowledge will prevail.

Do what seems best for you to do without clinging to beliefs or opinions when they begin to seem less important. When all beliefs and opinions are replaced with understanding you will have permanent peace of mind and emotional satisfaction.

It is important to have flawless knowledge and not merely a different belief or opinion that will also eventually have to be discarded or replaced with insight.

The concept of a divine mother is that Nature is governed and enlivened by evolutionary forces and influences pervaded by intelligence that can be worshipped or asked for guidance and support. Even when that aspect or idea is contemplated, it will have to be eventually transcended because it is not the absolute (pure) aspect of ultimate Reality.

We may be inspired by thoughts, images, or stories of the deeds of Krishna, Rama, or other real or imagined individuals who are said to be avatars (incarnated divine beings), but their real or presumed spiritual enlightenment cannot enlighten us. Many such "beings" are nonexistent and only mythical.

Although men and women who may be thought or believed to be avatars may have characteristics (spiritual awareness, exceptional abilities, or a charismatic personality) that attracts admiration or respect, they should not be worshipped or implored with prayers or by other means to do for us what we have to do for ourselves.

Several months ago I heard a recorded lecture by a minister of Self-Realization Fellowship that was presented to four thousand or more people who had traveled to Los Angeles to attend a conference. Although most of what he said was inspirational, practical, and enjoyable to hear, near the end of his talk he said, "Remember, Guruji [Paramahansa Yogananda] is omnipresent. He is watching over you and will answer your prayers and help you in many ways when you are receptive to what he can do for you."

I never heard Master say that he was omnipresent, omniscient, or omnipotent, or that after he left his body he would be responsive to prayers or intercede in the personal affairs of his disciples or kriya initiates.

That enlightened teachers abide in subtle realms and are willing and able to respond when we want or need their help is a childish idea. However, we can imagine a state of enlightened consciousness that a saint has or is presumed to have and be uplifted because doing it can arouse and bring forth our innate awareness of our true nature and higher realities.

Kriya initiates should not indulge in fantasy or allow their mind or behaviors to be influenced by superstitious ideas. If you wear gemstones or metal bracelets to balance your pranas (life forces) or neutralize planetary influences that you were told or you read somewhere could be done, use them as a talisman or a reminder that you, as a spiritual being, can be superior to all external influences.

As I am writing now (August 19, 2017), several hundreds of people are expected to visit this northeast Georgia region to see a total eclipse of the sun on Monday. Each year there are at least two solar and two lunar eclipses that can be seen somewhere on our planet. During some years there are more. Some are total and some are partial.

They are natural astronomical events. During a solar event the Moon passes between Earth and the Sun, blocking the rays of the Sun for a few minutes. It happens because the size of the Moon and the Sun seem to be the same or similar when they are lined up even though the Sun is much farther away than the Moon. Several centuries from now when the moon is farther from Earth, a total solar eclipse will not occur. The moon will appear somewhat smaller than it is now. A lunar eclipse occurs when our planet is temporarily between the Moon and Sun.

There are several Internet sites with pages of comments regarding the solar eclipse. Some fundamentalist Christians say it is a sign of either good or bad times ahead according to "God's plan." Some astrologers, Vedic as well as Western orientation, say it represents a manifestation of energies and influences that could quicken the spiritual awakening of receptive people. It is superstition, but many people are naive enough to believe it.

At the thought-free stage of meditation
I experienced intense joyousness, then the
absolute, pure essence of ultimate Reality.
– Lahiri Mahasaya (1828 – 1895)

2018 Retreats

Attendance is limited to 20 participants who will have private sleeping rooms and prepare vegetarian meals in their guest house. Participation by donation, at the end of the week.

Schedule

- Early morning meditation Monday to Friday at 7 a.m. for approximately one hour followed by a short talk by Roy Eugene Davis. Local members are invited to the morning meditations. An afternoon meditation will also be scheduled.
- Thursday morning: Kriya Yoga initiation. Persons already initiated may attend for review and to reaffirm their commitment to their spiritual practices.
- Optional Hatha Yoga and/or qiGong sessions when teachers are here.
- Occasional educational videos.

Reservations and Guidelines

- Be here for one week or two consecutive weeks.
- Let us know when you will arrive Saturday or Sunday. Arrive before dark.
- Depart the following Saturday morning if attending only the first week. Rooms will be cleaned at 9 a.m.
- No alcohol, tobacco, "recreational" drugs, or pets.
- Don't wear shorts, tank tops, or T-shirts with slogans. Help maintain the Retreat Center as a quiet place that supports everyone's spiritual aspirations.
- Don't bring friends or family members who aren't interested in participating.
- Avoid unnecessary social interactions. Use your free time to read, meditate, exercise moderately, rest, and reflect on your relationship with the Infinite.

A travel map is on our web site: www.csa-davis.org
Click on Retreats page

2018 Retreat Schedules & Application Information

Your guest house location and room number will be on the bulletin board in the lower parking lot.

Retreats described on the previous page.

April 30 to May 4 and May 7 to 11
June 4 to 8 and 11 to 15 July 2 to 6 and 9 to 13
July 30 to August 3 September 10 to 14 and 17 to 21

October to December Weekends:
October 20, 21. Three meals on Saturday. Sunday breakfast. Arrive Friday before dark.
Saturday: 7 a.m. meditation. 10 a.m. class. 12:30 p.m. class. 6 p.m. meditation & video. Sunday: 10 a.m. meditation.

November 17, 18. Program like October (above).

December 1:
Saturday 10 a.m. Three hour meditation. Lunch 1:15 p.m.

Retreat dates _____

Arrival date _____ Departure _____

Email _____ Tel _____

Name [s] _____

_____

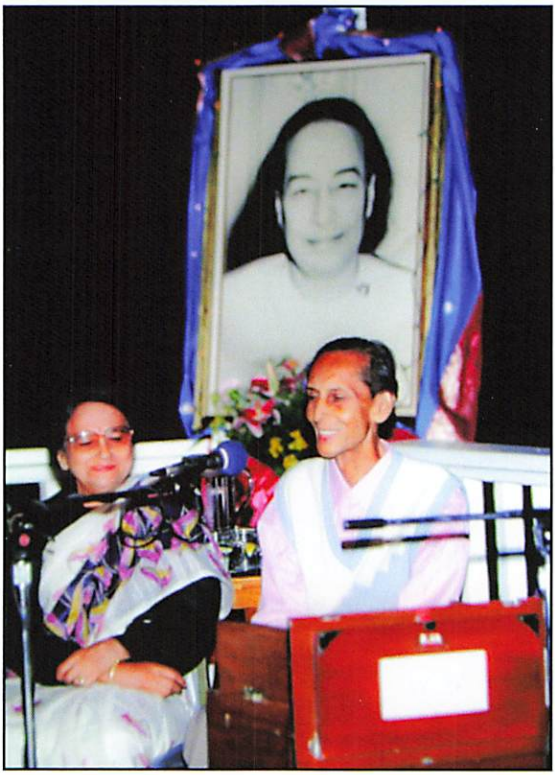
Address _____

_____

Center for Spiritual Awareness
Post Office Box 7 Lakemont, Georgia 30552-0001
Tel 706-782-4723 weekdays 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.
info@csa-davis.org www.csa-davis.org

Radiance

Published Quarterly for Kriya Yoga Initiates
Distributed Internationally Summer 2018



Hare Krishna Ghosh, Paramahansa Yogananda's nephew and his wife during a visit to Ananda Community in northern California. *1993*

Front cover: Roy Eugene Davis in the CSA Meditation Hall

copyright 2018 © Center for Spiritual Awareness
Written by Roy Eugene Davis for initiates in the Kriya Yoga tradition represented by Mahavatar Babaji, Lahiri Mahasaya, Sri Yukteswar, Paramahansa Yogananda, and their successors.
Published quarterly. Subscription in the U.S. 1 year, $8.00.
Foreign $10.00, airmailed.
Center for Spiritual Awareness P. O. Box 7 Lakemont, Georgia 30552
Offices and Retreat Center, 151 CSA Lane off Lake Rabun Road.
Tel: 706-782-4723 weekdays 8 a.m. – 3 p.m. Fax: 706-782-4560
For retreat reservations and book orders: info@csa-davis.org
To e-mail Roy Eugene Davis: rd@csa-davis.org
Web site: www.csa-davis.org

Thinking that you are not free keeps you in bondage.
Stop thinking like that and you will [soon] be free.
– Paramahansa Yogananda (1893 – 1952)

Awakening From the "Dream" of Mortality

To be *mortal* is to be to experience limitations while alive and eventually biologically die.

Spiritually enlightened people say that ordinary human life is often experienced like a dream with changeable perceptions and experiences of insignificant events that eventually dissolve and are seldom remembered.

When one's pure essence isn't known or experienced, the intellect is blurred, and the mind is modified and weakened by erroneous ideas, flawed perceptions, restlessness, and unstable emotions, *ordinary* human consciousness is not exceptional.

People whose lives are ordinary are emotionally immature, unimaginative, and inclined to have short-term goals that are generated by instincts and self-centered desires or long-term goals that are vague and not of real value.

Thinking that ordinary life is the only kind one will have, or can expect to have, a variety of limitations, whether self-created, unconsciously produced, inherited, or learned because of relationships with others who have limitations, are accepted as being normal. "Normal" human behavior is often unpredictable, inconsistent, and influenced by subconscious tendencies instead of being rational and of enduring spiritual value.

The most common problem most people have is thinking that they are limited physical beings instead of immortal spiritual beings with extraordinary powers of perception and ability that can be unveiled and expressed. Being egocentric instead of Self-knowing, they are inclined to think that complete well-being and happiness will be had when physical and emotional needs are satisfied, personal relationships are harmonious, and environmental circumstances are secure and supportive. Their cravings, strong attachments, and misguided behaviors often result in unhappiness and psychological conflicts.

External satisfying, reliable, and secure circumstances can provide a foundation for spiritual practice, but should not be the major purpose in life to endeavor to actualize (produce or attract and maintain by mental attitudes and physical actions).

Monitor your usual mental attitude, thoughts, moods, and behaviors. Are you harmfully influenced and/or inhibited by them, or do they empower you to experience and express excellence in all aspects of your life? Do you usually think of yourself as a limited human being or as a joyous, alert, and skillfully effective spiritual being? Until you are fully Self-aware, your concept of yourself is important. Mentally "see" and "feel" yourself as you want to be and awaken to that ideal level of being.

Until you experience a change of viewpoint that enables you to experience that you are an unrestricted spiritual being, use imagination and be inspired and motivated to live skillfully.

When you are aware of troublesome mental and emotional conditions or influences, learn to weaken and neutralize them with willpower, improved understanding, constructive living, and attentive meditation practice.

- Willpower should be used to wisely control impulses, emotions, thoughts, attention, and behaviors. Using it for selfish purposes interferes with emotional and spiritual growth and invasive or harmful words or actions may cause other people to be disturbed or harmed.

- Improved understanding of causes that produce effects and attract circumstances and of higher realities that determine the processes of Nature can empower rational thinking, skillful living, and effective spiritual practice.

- Intentional (deliberate, wisely purposeful) constructive living is spiritual practice that brings forth innate, divine qualities and higher knowledge.

- Focused attention is concentration. Concentrated contemplation of our true nature and/or ultimate Reality is meditation.

Meditative identification of attention and awareness with what

is contemplated (carefully observed or examined with expectation of discovery) is a samadhi (oneness) experience. Meditative oneness with an object of perception (inner light, pleasurable sensations, feelings of devotion, mental peacefulness, or sound) may not provide insights or be psychologically transformative. It is merely an enjoyable or interesting experience.

Samadhi with conscious experience of one's true nature or aspects of ultimate Reality clarifies awareness, reveals innate knowledge, and can progress to actual experience of one's pure essence, beyond which there is nothing to experience or know.

Kriya initiates should know that the aim of effective Kriya Yoga practice is transcendence (Sanskrit *kevala*). In some texts the pranayama used to move life force through the central *nadi* (channel or conduit) in the spine and into the brain is referred to as *kevala pranayama*, the practice or process (*kriya*) used to calm the mind, clarify awareness, and experience transcendent oneness or "aloneness"—pure, joyous, existence.

When Paramahansa Yogananda was preparing to come to America in 1920, his guru Swami Sri Yukteswar told him to "teach the Kriya Yoga of Patanjali."

> Constructive mental and physical disciplines, in-depth Self-study, and surrender to ultimate Reality are the practices of Kriya Yoga. It [Kriya Yoga] is practiced to remove afflictions and cultivate samadhi.
> —*Patanjali's Yoga-Sutras 2:1,2*

Complete Kriya Yoga practice includes everything worthwhile that we do to allow our innate urge to be spiritually conscious to be influential. Just using the pranayama learned at the time of initiation is not complete Kriya Yoga practice; it is only one of several helpful things to do. Kriya Yoga practice is effective only when it is properly practiced with skillful diligence.

Superficial, indifferent practices waste the time and energy of insincere practitioners and of the teachers who endeavor to assist and encourage them. Many thousands of people in the world today who say (or believe) they are practicing Kriya Yoga are not having the results they hope to have because they don't

understand philosophical concepts and teachings or mistakenly think that inattentive meditation techniques are sufficient.

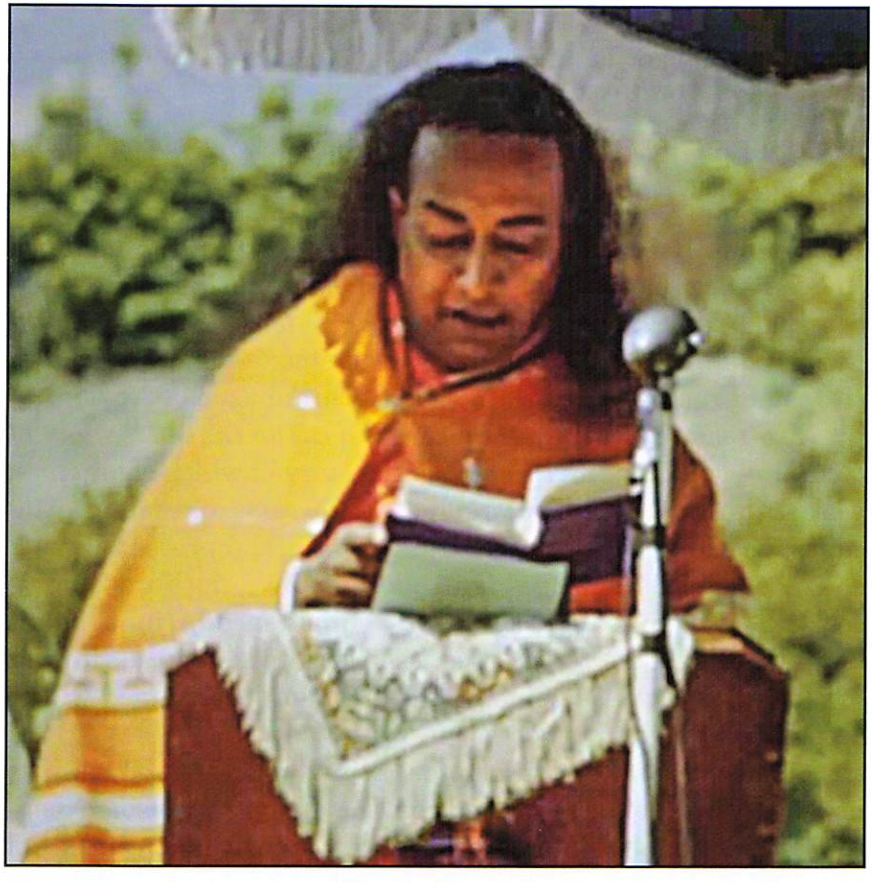
Profound Self-study is attentive examination with powers of discernment and experimental meditative contemplation of our essence and relationship with ultimate Reality. It requires more than simple-minded, however well-meaning, cultivation of devotion to a known or imagined aspect of ultimate Reality.

Surrender to ultimate Reality means letting go of the false sense or mistaken perception of independent identity in order to experience and know one's true nature. That which we want to realize is not only outside of us, it *is* us. Trying to surrender or let go of a mistaken sense of personal identity is not useful because we cannot rid ourselves of a confined sense of self that is being used to try to be free from it. We can, however, learn to "see it for what it is" with discernment and experience that we are not it. The small sense of self can be used to live in this world without being limited by it.

The *samadhi* cultivated with complete Kriya Yoga practice results in freedom from all limiting conditions. Three limiting conditions often mentioned in Yoga traditions are: 1) lack of accurate knowledge of ultimate Reality and our true nature or pure essence; 2) the flawed beliefs, ideas, and opinions that cause mental confusion; 3) mistaken perceptions which incline us to think or presume to know what we do not really know.

The Purpose of Kriya Yoga Practice is to Have All Obstacles to Spiritual Awakening Removed

Spiritual awakening can be natural and effortless when the mind is peacefully well-ordered, emotions are calm, awareness is clear, behaviors are constructive, optimistic aspiration to be Self-realized is fervent, and the innate urge to be fully awake is allowed to prevail.



Paramahansa Yogananda at Self-Realization Fellowship
Lake Shrine, Pacific Palisades, California. *1950*

Kriya Yoga Philosophy, Traditions, and Practices

Send questions or inquiries for possible use in a future issue by mail or e-mail rd@csa-davis.org

What are reliable sources of information about Kriya Yoga and spiritual practices?

Frequently carefully read Patanjali's *Yoga-Sutras* in which Kriya Yoga philosophical concepts and the basic practices are described. My commentary on the text is in *The Science of Self-Realization*, from CSA by letter, telephone, e-mail, or our web site csa-davis.org. Also as an e-book from Amazon or Apple.

Also read my book *The Eternal Way: The Inner Meaning of the Bhagavad Gita*. It is an allegory, a story in which characters, words, things, and actions represent spiritual and moral principles. Krishna, one of the central characters, represents innate enlightened consciousness that informs and guides the sincere seeker who aspires to be spiritually enlightened. Arjuna, as his disciple, represents characteristics associated with the third or lumbar chakra in the spine: self-control and determined will to accomplish worthy purposes.

At the end of the first chapter, Arjuna is distressed because he doesn't want to have to overcome the many troublesome mental and emotional influences he has learned to live with and seem to be related to him. (They are described as Arjuna's deluded cousins, "children" of intelligence and doubt.)

Almost any question about right living and a spiritual path that a person might have are answered in the *Yoga-Sutras* and the *Bhagavad Gita*. Read them once from front to back. Then read them completely again or the portions that appeal to you. It can be helpful to read one or two (or a few more) sentences or paragraphs after a meditation session when you may be more receptive to understanding and to nourish your mind and being with inspired ideas. Notice that your understanding becomes more comprehensive over a period of time.

From time to time I have allowed myself to be distracted from my spiritual practices, resume doing them, then get off course again. How can I be completely committed to my spiritual path?

Make a firm decision to be consistent and reinforce it with intentional, constructive actions. Clearly write what you will do. Have regular schedules for self-care routines, meditation, and performance of necessary duties and others you choose to include. Concentrate on essential activities and minimize or avoid activities which are not helpful to have.

Expect to be spiritually enlightened while patiently (calmly, without anxious concern regarding the results of your actions) doing everything with alert attention for the remaining years of your current incarnation.

Know that you are an immortal, spiritual being in space and time while anchored in the Infinite.

What are useful ways to control sexual feelings and thoughts? Is celibacy necessary for a person on a spiritual path?

Such feelings and thoughts can be controlled the same way other thoughts and feelings can be controlled.

Don't nurture them by being overly concerned about them or indulging in fantasies. Stay focused on your major aims and purposes and be actively engaged in accomplishing them.

Healthy men and women naturally have sexual inclinations from time to time. There is no harm in affectionately expressing them if they have a compatible companion. Doing what is natural will not interfere with spiritual growth.

If a person does not have a compatible relationship with a companion or wants to refrain from sexual interaction, urges can be restrained and neutralized with patient practice. Transmute the energies into refined energies by improving intellectual and mental powers, using energies in productive activities, study of higher realities, and superconscious meditation.

Celibacy is not necessary on a spiritual path. Some priests, monastics, and others who choose to be devoted to "good works" or spiritual study and practice want to avoid distractions.

Some men and women who choose a lifestyle or profession that requires them to take a vow of celibacy have been known to privately have sexual experiences. In recent years, unfavorable news about the misbehavior of Catholic priests and Indian and American swamis has been widely published.

The Sanskrit word *brahmacharya* is defined as "the path that leads one to *Brahman* (transcendent pure consciousness); dwelling or living in pure consciousness; right behavior; and a student of higher consciousness. In India, young boys who live in ashrams to study scriptures and meditate are advised to be celibate in order and focus completely on studies and spiritual practices. When their training is completed they may marry, have children, and be responsible members of their community.

Lahiri Mahasaya and his wife had five children. He advised his young disciples to marry. Don't feel guilty or be ashamed of natural urges and inclinations.

Is it necessary to use the "higher" kriya meditation techniques?

It isn't necessary to use intricate meditation methods that you may have heard about.

The meditation methods that Lahiri Mahasaya sometimes taught his disciples after they used basic ones for a while are sometimes called "higher" ones because it is presumed that people who were taught to use them were more proficient meditators. Some initiates mistakenly think that using them will quicken their spiritual awakening. I knew several people who claimed to use them whose spiritual awareness was not exceptional. Some were so preoccupied with "skillful practice" of techniques that they didn't go beyond them to transcendent realizations. The purpose of using meditation techniques is to calm the mind and clarify awareness so that awareness of our pure essence is experienced.

If you know anyone who uses so-called "advanced meditation methods" carefully observe their mental attitudes, words, and behaviors to discover if you can detect any evidence of the value of their special practices.

Sitting for long periods of time and having calm breathing and heart rhythms are not proof of clear states of conscious awareness. They are merely signs of deep relaxation.

Even being able to experience samadhi supported by objects of perception is not proof of "higher" states of awareness or of understanding one's true nature or ultimate Reality. There are many skillful meditators who are still egocentric and small-minded. After a quiet, somewhat peaceful meditation session, delusions (false beliefs and opinions) and troublesome subconscious influences modify their mind and awareness. Instead of being wisely decisive and intentional, habitual ways of thinking and behaving determine most of their thoughts and actions.

Are there highly Self-realized souls who were never completely involved in the realm of Nature?

I don't have personal knowledge of what are said to be ever-free units of the pure essence of ultimate Reality. I only have ideas about them using rational thinking and intuition.

The philosophical system known as *Samkhaya* which numbers and describes categories and orderly processes of cosmic manifestation is nondualistic, emphasizing that one Reality with attributes (*purusha*) produces universes with primordial nature (*prakriti: pra,* go forth; *kri,* to do) as Om, space, time, and fine cosmic forces which manifest the realm of Nature. Individualized units of its pure essence animate life forms. Units not involved with primordial nature may be ever free in pure, transcendent realms.

Some philosophers err in saying that Samkhya is dualistic, that Spirit and Nature are separate realities even though its explanations of cosmic manifestation clearly indicate that universes emerge from the Om vibration which emanates from the expressive aspect of ultimate Reality. Some philosophers (and yogis) cling to traditional ideas. Example: even if they know about Sri Yukteswar's explanation of *yugas* or cycles of time in relationship to the increase or decline of intellectual abilities, they still say we are in a *kali yuga*, a dark age.

Sri Yukteswar's theory is that we are 318 years into a 2,400 year cycle of increasing intellectual capacities of people. It will be followed by 3,600 years of greatly improved mental ability and 4,800 years of widespread spiritual awareness.

You were fortunate to be guided by Paramahansa Yogananda at an early age. Where can I find a person like that to guide me?

I am not aware of anyone in our Kriya Yoga tradition, or a teacher in any other spiritual tradition, who is realized enough for me to recommend.

I am the only disciple of Paramahansa Yogananda who had his personal guidance, and was ordained by him, who is teaching and initiating. All of the others have left this world.

I cannot perform miracles, dissolve people's karma, or provide instant samadhi. I teach basic philosophical concepts and spiritual practices, how to live effectively, and how to meditate superconsciously. Steady, patient adherence to practices that will bring forth ideal results is highly recommended.

Did Paramahansa Yogananda have challenges to confront?

When he first came to America in 1920 he had to learn how to adapt to our culture and how to effectively communicate his teachings to large public gatherings and to smaller groups that were organized for personal instruction and initiation.

In the 1920s when he spoke to thousands of people in large cities his mission-purpose was to "plant spiritual seeds in their minds, hoping that some would eventually sprout, grow, and be of benefit to them." In some cities, groups were formed and sincere truth seekers were encouraged to continue their studies and meditation practices. Most of the regional groups faded away during the Great Depression years of the 1930s.

From the early 1930s onward, Master devoted his time and energies to establishing his *work* (as he called it) in California from where its influence would be extended to many countries. In 1935 he returned to India for a year where he lectured in several cities, more strongly organized his residential school in Ranchi, visited ashrams, and was with Sri Yukteswar, who

passed on March 9, 1936 and was buried at his ashram in Puri. A small temple shrine was later built over his grave.

When he returned to America in late 1936, James Lynn, his spiritually advanced disciple and a wealthy business man, presented him with a beautiful quiet ashram overlooking the Pacific Ocean in Encinitas, California, a few miles north of San Diego. Master divided his time between that ashram and the Los Angeles Self-Realization Fellowship headquarters.

In 1943, temples designated as "a church of all religions" were dedicated in Hollywood and San Diego. For several years, until he withdrew into seclusion in 1950 to write commentaries on the *Bhagavad Gita*, he spoke in those temples on alternate Sunday mornings.

Master told me and a few other male disciples that one of the most difficult things was to attract competent, dedicated people to help him with his work who would be reliable representatives for many years.

Some of the men he ordained became disinterested or were not able to understand and appropriately represent his mission. A few who stayed with the organization for several years were untrustworthy.

Explain more about the main prana channel in the spine and why it can be helpful to be aware of it during meditation and, perhaps, at other times.

Of the many of channels (Sanskrit *nadis*) through which life forces circulate in the body, *sushumna nadi* (the radiant path) is of importance for Kriya Yoga initiates. It is also known as *the path* (way) *to God* (ultimate Reality) because when prana flows through it into the higher brain, it is easier to experience transcendent samadhi (pure joyous-existence-being).

Prana is pulled upward in this channel with a pranayama during inhalation and allowed to flow down with exhalation. The mental calmness can result in *kaivalya* (supreme aloneness or transcendence).

The stillness that can prevail after pranayama practice is transformative. Although preliminary meditation practices can

improve concentration and awaken and circulate prana, pure superconsciousness is more likely to occur when attention is withdrawn from physical, emotional, and mental conditions.

To be aware of flows of prana in the sushumna nadi, be more aware of your spine. Feel it. If you practice Hatha Yoga, do routines that stretch and twist the spine. When using kriya pranayama, feel a flow of life force moving up and down in the spine when inhaling and exhaling.

After kriya pranayama, bring the prana to the higher brain, keep it there, disregard breathing and other physical actions and sensations, be completely inward, and aspire to experience pure awareness. Remember that you are a spiritual being. Let go of all other thoughts. Abide in pure Self-awareness.

When you are engaged in ordinary activities, be aware of the chakras from the dorsal to the spiritual eye and crown chakra.

At the innermost level of your being your awareness is clear and free. Spiritual enlightenment is conscious awareness and accurate knowledge of your pure essence.

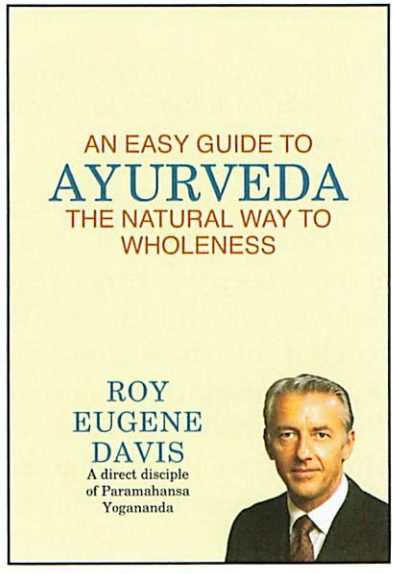
2nd PRINTING

An Easy Guide to Ayurveda

THE NATURAL WAY TO WHOLENESS

Paper Cover
5.375 x 8 160 pages
$5.00 plus $3.00 postage
CSA Press, Publisher

In India:
www.bjainbooks.com



Do These Things

Demonstrate your dedication to your spiritual path by daily meditating to illumine your mind and consciousness with vivid awareness of your pure essence and eternal relationship with the Infinite. Initiation was "a new beginning" on a spiritual path, an occasion to firmly resolve to be spiritually enlightened and to follow-through with constructive actions.
Read *Patanjali's Yoga-Sutra* 2:1,2.

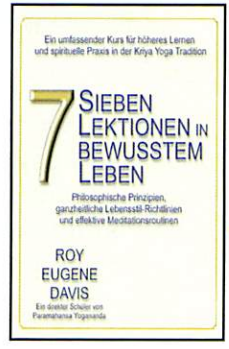
Reach out to people who you know to be sincerely interested in spirituality. Inform them about our ministry services. Do this in various, practical ways. Tell others about our Web site so they can read *Truth Journal* on line, see or hear some of my recent talks, and be informed about our activities and services. If every reader of this notice immediately reaches out to 10 or more people, more than twelve thousand new contacts will be made. **www.csa-davis.org**

Financially support CSA on a regular schedule. If you already do this, your participation is appreciated, and is helpful.

Read the 2nd edition of ***Paramahansa Yogananda As I Knew Him***. Tell spiritual friends and kriya initiates about it. It has more information than the first edition published 13 years ago, some new photos, and a glossary with precise definitions of 150 English and Sanskrit words and philosophical concepts.

NEW
Sieben Lektionen in bewusstem Leben
Seven Lesson in Conscious Living translated by CSA member Walter Berger. euro 14.80
Amazon.de

Kriya Yoga philosophy, traditions, and practices, holistic lifestyle routines, and meditation techniques.


Ein umfassender Kurs für höheres Lernen und spirituelle Praxis in der Kriya Yoga Tradition
7
SIEBEN LEKTIONEN IN BEWUSSTEM LEBEN
Philosophische Prinzipien, ganzheitliche Lebensstil-Richtlinien und effektive Meditationsroutinen
ROY EUGENE DAVIS
Ein direkter Schüler von Paramahansa Yogananda

Revised Second Edition 2018

PARAMAHANSA YOGANANDA

As I Knew Him

Experiences and Reflections of a Disciple

ROY EUGENE DAVIS

New, revised & enlarged 2nd edition
Quality paperback 224 pages $8.00 plus $3.00 postage
(16 pages of color and black and white photos)
Glossary with precise definitions of 150 English and Sanskrit words and philosophical concepts that are helpful to know. Published June 2018.

Order by mail, telephone 706-782-4723 weekdays or email info@csa-davis.org

Radiance

Published Quarterly for Kriya Yoga Initiates
Distributed Internationally Autumn 2018

Swami Sri Yukteswar and Paramahansa Yogananda in India in 1936. On the right side of the picture: Richard Wright.

Front cover: Roy Eugene Davis in the CSA Meditation Hall. *2002*

copyright 2018 © Center for Spiritual Awareness
Written by Roy Eugene Davis for initiates in the Kriya Yoga tradition represented by Mahavatar Babaji, Lahiri Mahasaya, Sri Yukteswar, Paramahansa Yogananda, and their successors.
Published quarterly. Subscription in the U.S. 1 year, $8.00.
Foreign $10.00, airmailed.
Center for Spiritual Awareness P. O. Box 7 Lakemont, Georgia 30552
Offices and Retreat Center on CSA Lane off Lake Rabun Road.
Tel: 706-782-4723 weekdays 8 a.m. – 3 p.m. Fax: 706-782-4560
For retreat reservations and book orders: info@csa-davis.org
To e-mail Roy Eugene Davis: rd@csa-davis.org
Web site: www.csa-davis.org

Whenever you initiate someone, I, or
one of the Great Ones will be there.
– *Paramahansa Yogananda (1893 – 1952)*

The Significance of Initiation

significance The quality of importance and value of something.
initiation Beginning a new stage of life. Instruction in lifestyle routines and practices that nurture emotional and spiritual growth and maturity. Acceptance or admission into a group of adherents of specific practices with or without a formal ritual.

Initiation should be entered into with sincere intention and firm resolve to adhere to guidelines and practices that are learned. It should not be requested, or entered into, merely to "try it" or to satisfy one's curiosity. Like formal marriage or other rituals that are "new beginnings" in lifestyle routines or social status, one should know what the requirements and duties are, and endeavor to fulfill them.

In our current era, many people examine various Internet sources and ask others for their opinions about spiritual practices and philosophical ideas, or they frequently visit various gurus and attend retreats and seminars. The information they acquire and the experiences they have may be only somewhat helpful but not psychologically or spiritually transformative.

When researching the meditation methods taught in the traditions transmitted through the guru-lineage of Mahavatar Babaji, Lahiri Mahasaya, Sri Yukteswar, Paramahansa Yogananda, and their successors, information that is acquired will be more beneficial if initiation is experienced. At the time of initiation, instruction is clearly imparted and a psychic (soul) connection is offered that can connect the new initiate's awareness with the consciousness and spiritual energies that flow through the gurus. Paramahansa Yogananda emphasized that important aspect of initiation during my last private visit with him in early 1952. (Read his words at the top of this page.)

A Sanskrit word for "great one" is *mahasiddha* (greatly perfected or spiritually accomplished person).

I was initiated into the Kriya Yoga tradition in the summer of 1950 and ordained to teach and represent it in late autumn, 1951. I had read about Yoga two years before meeting Master, read his *Autobiography of Yogi* early in 1949, practiced Hatha Yoga, and used a simple form of meditation. Personal contact with Master renewed and strengthened our relationship that has remained constant through the years since then.

Before I was formerly initiated I prepared for it by regular meditation and anticipating the opportunity. After initiation, I concentrated on adhering to the lifestyle routines and to daily meditation practice. I didn't discuss my thoughts, aspirations, or experiences with anyone except Master. I privately visited him every two months and at other times endeavored to stay mentally and spiritually attuned with him and the lineage.

My commitment to the spiritual path was, and is, complete. I have never been overly interested in the opinions, theories, or random behaviors of others. The spiritual path emphasized in our Kriya Yoga tradition consists of ethical thinking and living; constructive thinking and actions; intensive Self-inquiry with intellectual discernment and super-conscious meditation practice; and purification of the mistaken sense of self-identity.

Kriya Yoga Principles and Practices

Kriyas are processes or actions that are performed or that spontaneously occur that can enhance well-being and spiritual awareness. Culmination of such processes or actions is *yoga* (firm unification of attention and awareness with one's pure essence). When Sanskrit words are not used, the lifestyle and meditation practices are still of significant value for anyone. A Kriya Yoga practitioner doesn't have to be a Christian, Jew, Muslim, Buddhist, Hindu, or a member of any other group or tradition. Want to be Self-realized and do what will allow it to be actualized. Self-realization can naturally occur when afflictions are absent.

Afflictions are troublesome psychological conditions such as doubt, fear, attitudes of helplessness or hopelessness, trauma, harmful habits or inclinations, intellectual deficiency, mental incompetence, emotional immaturity, egotism along with pride

and arrogance, laziness, moodiness, stupidity (lack of ability or unwillingness to learn), and other conditions that blur awareness and make it difficult to function or be aware of one's true nature and ultimate Reality.

The purpose of Kriya Yoga practice is to remove afflictions (various kinds of troublesome conditions) and enable cultivation of direct experience of one's pure essence.

Holding together attention and awareness with inner light, pleasurable sensations or moods, subtle sound frequencies produced by the nervous system or imagined, or mind-produced phenomena that seem like visions or astral perceptions are experiences of samadhi supported by those perceptions. When that kind of samadhi fades, there may be memories of it but no enduring beneficial effects or revelations.

Master told me not to be satisfied with temporary, superficial samadhi experiences, but to "go all the way" (completely wake up) in my current incarnation.

Complete liberation (purity) of consciousness prevails when erroneous ideas are absent, powers of perception are accurate, troublesome subconscious influences have been neutralized, the influences of the *gunas* (subtle attributes emanated from the expressive aspect of ultimate Reality that pervade Nature and all things in it) no longer influence our consciousness or mind, and we are permanently established in Self-knowing.

Liberation of consciousness is the ultimate degree of Self-realization to which to awaken. The more spiritually awake we are, the more the collective consciousness of all forms of life is purified and all people are benefited. Some nearly enlightened people feel such compassion that they say they are willing to incarnate repeatedly until all souls are liberated.

The problem with that idea is that souls (units of the pure essence of ultimate Reality) will continue to be individualized for many millions, perhaps billions, of years. Willingness to be spiritually helpful to others to the extent that help can be provided is a virtue; wanting or vowing to do it for everyone far into the future is unrealistic.

Some Responsibilities of Kriya Yoga Initiate–Discipleship

Before initiation one should know what is required of a disciple (Latin *learner*), be able to understand what is taught, and be able and willing to wisely use the practices or procedures that are taught.

Constancy (faithful, unwavering, purposefully determined) commitment to right living, continued learning, and effective spiritual practice is necessary. (See page 4, 3rd paragraph for a brief description of lifestyle and spiritual practices.)

> On this [spiritual] path, those who are firmly committed are resolute, the thoughts of those who are not committed branch out in many directions and in a variety of ways.
> – *Bhagavad Gita 2:41*

> Among thousands of people, scarcely one strives to be Self-realized, and among those who aspire and who are somewhat accomplished, scarcely one knows Me as I am [ultimate Reality as it is]. – *7:3*

The following prose adaptation of the above verse is from a poem titled *The Song Celestial* by Edwin Arnold *(1832–1904)*.

> Among many thousands of people, perhaps only one in a thousand aspires to know Me [ultimate Reality], and among them, very few succeed in doing it.

Remember that the *Bhagavad Gita* is a story in which names of characters, things, words, and actions represent moral and spiritual principles. *Krishna* means enlightened consciousness in which all knowledge is permanently present.

Of the more than one hundred thousand people who were initiated by Paramahansa Yogananda during his lifetime, only a few were fully committed to right living, continued learning, and meditation practice. Most of them, even those with good intentions, either became disinterested in spiritual matters, were not highly motivated, were too easily distracted by environmental circumstances, or allowed habits, moods, and subconscious influences to distort their awareness and keep it confined.

Of the more than ten thousand people that were initiated by

me during the past several decades, many who were older than I was when I initiated them have died; others are doing something else; perhaps ten percent are reasonably attentive to doing things to nurture their total well-being and spiritual awareness while aspiring to be fully Self-realized.

People who don't adhere to a spiritual path are not bad, ignorant, or intentionally lazy or careless. They are limited by various conditions that blur their awareness, confuse their mind, unsettle their emotions, dull their intellect, and incline them to be confined by habits that are harmful or not useful.

A major self-created limiting condition that many people have is thinking that they are human beings hoping to become spiritual beings instead of knowing that they are immortal spiritual beings in a temporary human role. They may also be inclined to think they have to "find" or "please" God, work hard to overcome karma, avoid or rise above troublesome planetary influences, accept their "fate" or conditions as they are, or look forward to having better opportunities to awaken spiritually in this world, astral realms, or another incarnation.

Emotional immaturity is a limiting condition that can be outgrown or transcended by being responsible for mental and emotional states, private behaviors, and influential actions. Emotionally immature people who think of themselves as truth seekers are inclined to want a dependent relationship with a spiritual teacher, like to think of God as a cosmic person that can or should do good things for them, and are not always willing to improve their understanding and functional skills.

In a letter recently sent to me a person complained that my writings were too intellectual, lacked feeling or a sense of love, and had words that he couldn't easily understand. He said that he preferred a "human touch" that indicated an understanding of reader's emotional needs. When I suggested that he use a dictionary or an Internet word source to improve his ability to comprehend words, he sent another letter in which he again emphatically stated his former opinions.

I noticed similar attitudes among some brother and sister disciples in the early 1950s. When Master told them how to

improve their functional abilities, or meditation practice, they only tried to do it for a short period of time, then seemed to forget what he had said or behaved like it wasn't important.

A common obstacle to growing to emotional and spiritual maturity is self-centeredness: obsessive preoccupation with a mistaken sense of self-identify, circumstances, things, relationships, opinions, and social status.

One of a spiritual teacher's responsibilities is to help people purify their awareness and enable them to know their essence rather than to remain fixated in a small sense of self-identity. Awakening from strong ego-identification can occur by using discriminate intelligence to discern the difference between it and being an observer of it, and cultivating superconsciousness that provide actual experience of being other than a small, confined sense of self-identity.

Growing to emotional and spiritual maturity can gradually (or more quickly) occur while we attend to duties and relationships. When we know we are spiritual beings awakening to Self-realization we can view everything that we do as spiritual practice. Adhering to useful regimens of self-care, acquiring knowledge that enables us to live well and be more spiritually awake, working, paying bills, wisely interacting with others, and nurturing the environment can be done skillfully. When understanding is accurate, we can know the physical world to be just as "spiritual" as any other place in the universe.

Many of the problems and difficulties that some people have result from flawed perceptions of their true nature and objective events and circumstances they observe.

In the Bhagavad Gita (chapter eighteen, verses 20 – 26) knowledge and actions are classified according to the attributes (*gunas*) of Nature that are allowed to be influential.

Knowledge by which the imperishable essence of all beings is seen as undivided is sattwic [pure].

Knowledge which mistakenly perceives multiplicity in and as all beings because of their seeming separateness is rajasic.

Knowledge that causes unreasonable attachment to insignificant conditions without seeing their causes is tamasic.

Obligatory actions performed without attachment, desire, or feelings of aversion, with no desire to be rewarded, are pure.

Actions that are forcefully performed and strongly impelled by self-centered desires are rajasic.

Actions performed because of delusion [flawed thinking] without regard for their consequences or loss or injury to others, are tamasic.

A person who is free from attachments and egotism and is steady and undisturbed in success or failure, is sattwic.

Learn the indications of guna influences and how to work with them, then transcend them. Sattwa guna is indicated by purity.

Rajas guna is indicated by movements caused by mental, emotional, egoistic, or sensual urges. Rajas guna influenced by Sattwa guna is indicated by mental and emotional states and actions that are constructive.

Tamas guna is indicated by inertia, intellectual dullness, confusion, and apathy. Its influences can be weakened and neutralized by intentional constructive actions, aspiration to be spiritually conscious, and cultivation of superconscious states.

Remember that you don't have to be an effect of external influences because you, as an individualized unit of the pure essence of ultimate Reality, can choose your mental and emotional states, states of consciousness, behaviors, and how you respond to events and circumstances. Mental attitudes and behaviors that reflect feelings of helplessness can be replaced with understanding and constructive actions.

When changes no longer occur in your mind and awareness you can experience peacefulness and perhaps an awareness of your changeless, pure essence. When guna influences cease you can realize (experience and know) it. That is *nirbikalpa* (without the support of thoughts, emotions, or any other conditions or perceptions) *samadhi*, transcendent realization.

In Patanjali's *Yoga-Sutras* and in some verses of the *Bhagavad Gita, yoga* and *samadhi* have the same meanings. In the first chapter of the *Yoga-Sutras*, how to experience samadhi is described as an introduction to the precise practices that are described in the remaining chapters.

Although a common definition of *yoga* (from *yug*, to unite or bring or hold together) is often used to imply unification of the soul or Self with God, the real meaning is that when changes in the mind and awareness stop, one's pure essence is revealed to be what it is. That is pure yoga (samadhi, oneness).

What is done to weaken and remove obstructions that blur awareness and allow samadhi to be revealed is often referred to as practicing yoga, although *real practice of yoga* is practice of samadhi—interludes of Self-realization—until realization is permanent and unchanging.

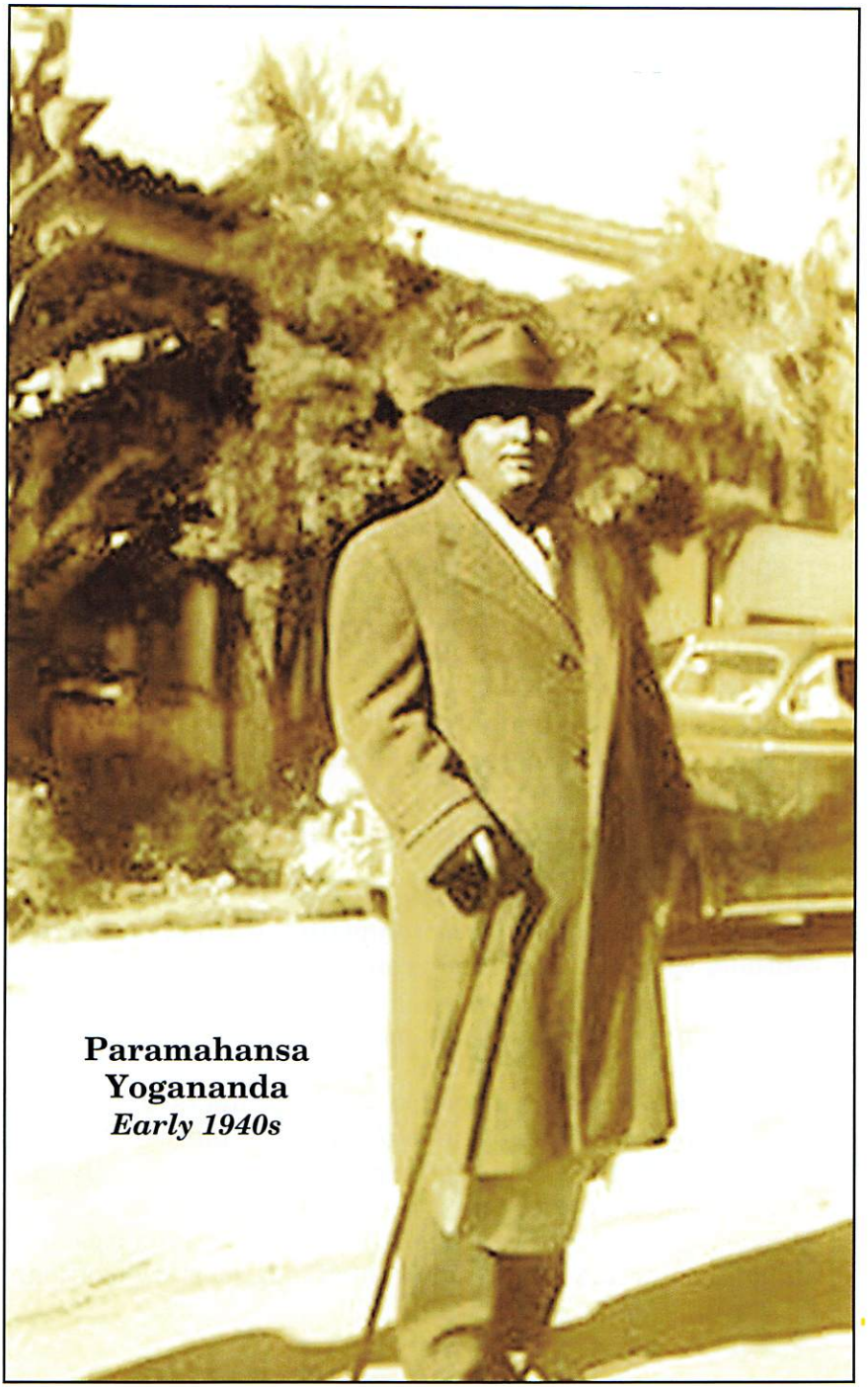
When most people say they "practice yoga" they mean their routines of asanas, pranayamas, and perhaps superficial meditation. They usually do not know about transcendent states of meditation or how to nurture them. To be fully spiritually enlightened is usually seldom thought about or imagined as being possible in the near future.

Even among Kriya Yoga initiates, only a few are dedicated to regular, effective spiritual practice being most important in their schedule of lifestyle routines—even when they have been informed that spiritual awakening progress can be quickened by intensive (concentrated) right endeavor. Sincere dedication to skillful Kriya Yoga practice also makes the mind and awareness receptive to spontaneous spiritual awakenings that can occur by grace.

When transcendent samadhi prevails, there is no distinction between one's pure essence and the pure essence of ultimate Reality. – *The Shandilya Upanishad*

Affirm With Conviction

The radiant purity of my Essence of Being continuously illumines my mind and consciousness. The limitless, joyous freedom I have, I wish for everyone, everywhere.



Paramahansa Yogananda
Early 1940s

Dialogue

Kriya Yoga Philosophy, Traditions, and Practices

Send questions or inquiries for possible use in a future issue by mail or e-mail rd@csa-davis.org

Why are some people who are able to experience deep meditative states of consciousness unable to live effectively or sometimes say or do things that indicate psychological conflicts?

They may still have delusions (false beliefs or opinions) and troublesome subconscious influences rooted in the mind. If they sincerely want to be fully enlightened and do what is necessary to awaken completely, they can be liberated and be able to live skillfully and enjoyably. If they endeavor to live skillfully now, their spiritual awakening can occur more quickly.

To quickly be fully spiritually enlightened, do I have to meditate for many hours every day?

Daily sessions of 30 minutes to an hour are beneficial, with occasional longer, deeper sessions. From time to time meditate for two or more hours.

In the *Bhagavad Gita* (6:10–14) effective meditation practices is described:

The yogi should steadily contemplate the supreme Reality, in solitude, with mind and body controlled, without desires for anything else.

Established in a comfortable meditation posture, in a clean and appropriate place;

There, with inspired intention, with thoughts and senses controlled, one should meditate to purify the mind.

Holding body, neck, and head erect, motionless, steadily gazing into the spiritual eye;

Serene, fearless, self-controlled, with mental impulses subsubdued, the devotee should sit, devoted to highest realization.

Read the rest of chapter six in my book *The Eternal Way: The Inner Meaning of the Bhagavad Gita*. Also chapter eighteen for more information about influences of gunas, subtle attributes pervading the expressive aspect of ultimate Reality, and realms that emanate from it.

Remember that preliminary samadhis that are not yet pure may be mixed with thoughts and emotions. Avoid thinking that a serene state of consciousness along with pleasant thoughts and feelings, and perhaps interesting visual perceptions, is the ultimate degree of realization.

Aspire to experience pure-conscious-existence with nothing else in your awareness. That is called *kaivalya* (absolute, pure aloneness), the ultimate realization to have when meditating. By repeated practice of that kind of samadhi (yoga), the mind and awareness are eventually, completely purified. Flawless Self-realization can then prevail during and after meditation and there is nothing more to realize, even though subtle perceptions of ultimate Reality may continue to occur when you are not completely inwardly poised in Self-awareness during meditation or occasions of calm contemplation.

A useful definition of contemplation is "to examine something with alert expectation of discovery." That is how to medietate effectively. In the *Yoga-Sutras* the last three stages of the practice of the "eightfold way" are concentration (focused attention), contemplative meditation (unwavering concentration on what is to be experienced or known), and samadhi (either identification with the focus of attention or transcendence).

The recommended practices (kriyas) used to nurture well-being, remove afflictions, purify the mind and awareness, and allow Self-revelations are the eight limbs:

1) Ethical thinking and behaviors. 2) Constructive thinking, living, and meditation practice to awaken from a mistaken awareness of self-identity. 3) Stable meditation posture. 4) Pranayama (free flowing prana or life force) which may occur naturally or be the result of regulated breathing. 5) Inward-directed attention. 6) Concentration. 7) Contemplative meditation. 8) Samadhi.

Patanjali recommended meditative contemplation on Om as

a way to Self-realization (1:27 – 29) to rise above a small sense of self-identity and have awareness restored to wholeness. Om can be mentally chanted for a while, contemplating it as a manifestation of ultimate reality, then just being aware of Om, feeling identified with it, and transcending it. Om contemplation can be done early during a meditation session or later if other methods (prayer, affirmation, mantra, pranayama) are used. Regardless of preliminary procedures, conclude with contemplation of Om. Want to know its source and pure existence beyond its source.

Besides improving my understanding of my true nature and higher realities, what else can I do to nurture spiritual awakening and growth?

Be attentive to the first two limbs of Kriya Yoga practice. Be compassionate, honest, truthful, committed to your spiritual path, and generous. Keep your body and environment clean; be inwardly peaceful in all circumstances; think and behave constructively; examine your true nature and higher realities with powers of discriminative intelligence and meditation practice; and endeavor to always be aware of your relationship with the Infinite. Do what Master told me to do during my first private talk with him (December 25, 1949):

"Read a little. Meditate more. Think of God all the time."

Write those words on a card and put it where you will often see it until they are always in your awareness. You will not have to wonder about how to live your life.

Selected reading can provide useful information and enable you to live more effectively. Regular superconscious meditation will purify your mind and awareness. Constant awareness of ultimate Reality and your relationship to it will keep you anchored in the Infinite.

When all thoughts and actions are fully conformed to one's aspiration to be self-realized, one can be physically and mentally strong and spiritually aware.
– Patanjali's Yoga-Sutras 2:38

As units of the pure essence of ultimate Reality, why do we have to study, meditate, and endeavor to be Self-realized?

It is only necessary until we are fully conscious of our true nature. Thinking or talking about what we are is not the same as knowing and expressing it. When we incarnate we usually partially forget our origin and identify with mental states and objective conditions.

What can I do to prepare to represent our Kriya Yoga tradition as a meditation teacher or minister?

Be dedicated to continued learning, wholesome lifestyle routines, and meditation practice so that you will be living and demonstrating the principles. Then, attend a training program here to learn to organize, publicize, and present introductory talks and conduct group meditation sessions.

It isn't necessary to be a skillful public speaker, psychological counselor, lifestyle coach, or guru (teacher) who becomes personally involved with the people you serve. The most useful things to do are to offer opportunities for learning meditation methods and attending meditation sessions once a week, twice a month, or once a month. When you are firmly established in your meditation practice, your life is well-ordered, and are not egotistical (with an inflated sense of self-importance) it will be easier to be a successful representative.

The most useful mental attitude to have is willingness to serve others. Although Paramahansa Yogananda was a perfect example of a spiritual teacher, I heard him say, "I am not the guru. God is the guru. I am only God's servant." With him as a role model, and his authorization, I have been representing our Kriya Yoga tradition for sixty-seven years (since 1951) as a spiritual duty.

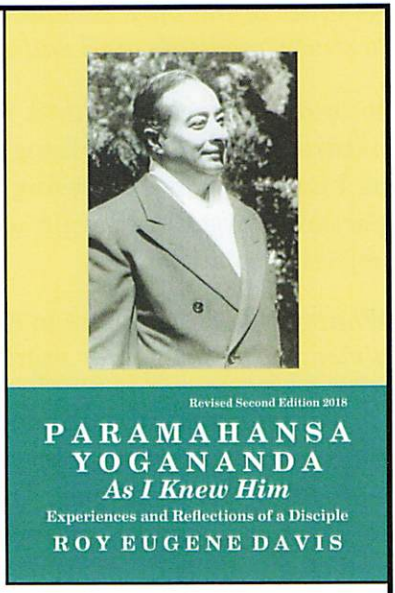
Begin now to reach out to others in constructive ways. Give them our literature, link them to our Web site; invite spiritual friends to meditate with you from time to time; donate to fund our ministry services.

2nd Edition
Revised and Enlarged
11,000 copies
published June 2018

PARAMAHANSA YOGANANDA
As I Knew Him

by Roy Eugene Davis

Quality Paperback
ISBN 978-0-87707-218-8
6 x 9 format 22 photos
224 pages $8.00



In this book the only ordained disciple of Paramahansa Yogananda who is actively teaching describes his experiences with him. Many of the author's observations of his guru—what he was like and what he taught—differ from what other people have said because their experiences and perceptions were different.

Chapter Titles

Beginnings — Early Experiences With My Guru
Observations and Reflections of a Disciple
Transitions — Continuing Grace

Addendum

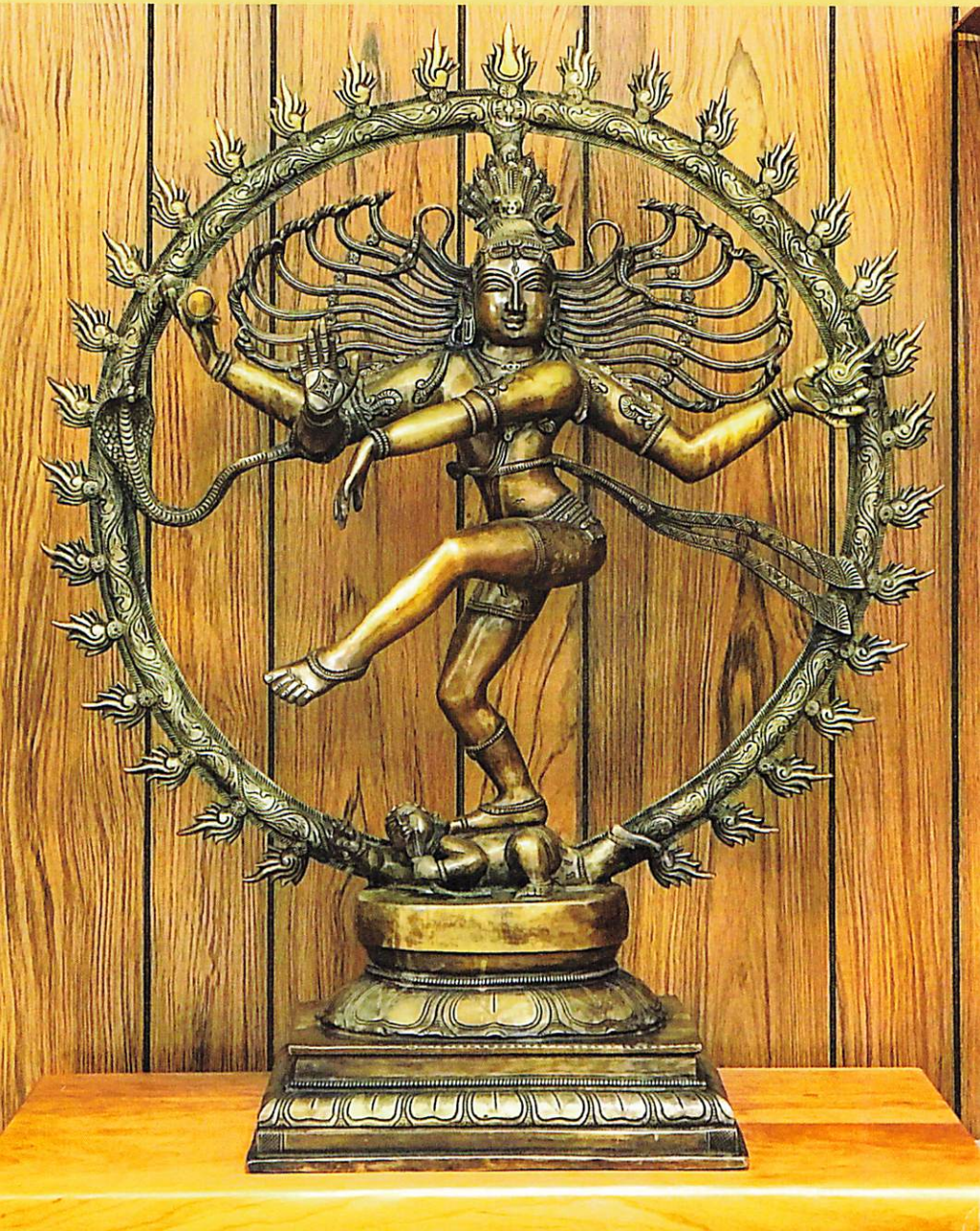
Answers to Questions About the Spiritual Path
Philosophy, Traditions, and Essential Practices of Yoga
The Inner Meaning of the Bhagavad Gita
Lineages of Gurus in this Kriya Yoga Tradition

Glossary

Precise definitions and explanations of more than 150 English and Sanskrit words and philosophical concepts that are helpful to know

Radiance

Published Quarterly for Kriya Yoga Initiates
Distributed Internationally Winter 2018-19



Front Cover Photo

New Nataraja Statue in the CSA Meditation Hall

Installed September 2018

The lord (raja) of cosmic dance. A symbolic representation of forces that produce or dissolve universes. Made of stone, iron, or other metals. This bronze icon from India was obtained from lotussculpture.com in southern California.

Illustrated with four arms. A drum to maintain a rhythm is in one right hand. The other right hand with the palm outward represents the "fear not" mudra or gesture. One left hand holds a flame of fire. The other left hand points to the upraised left foot that indicates freedom. The right foot stands on a small being that represents spiritual ignorance, which is powerless.

Flames around the circle indicate transformative influences that either manifest or dissolve universes. Strands of hair behind the body indicate ecstatic dance movements. The serene facial expression indicates inward, detached calmness.

31 inches (78.74CM) high 27 inches (68.58CM) wide
weight 60 pounds (27.2155 kilos)

copyright 2018 © Center for Spiritual Awareness
Written by Roy Eugene Davis for initiates in the Kriya Yoga tradition represented by Mahavatar Babaji, Lahiri Mahasaya, Sri Yukteswar, Paramahansa Yogananda, and their successors.
Published quarterly. Subscription in the U.S. 1 year, $8.00.
Foreign $10.00, airmailed.
Center for Spiritual Awareness P. O. Box 7 Lakemont, Georgia 30552
Offices and Retreat Center on CSA Lane off Lake Rabun Road.
Tel: 706-782-4723 weekdays 8 a.m. – 3 p.m. Fax: 706-782-4560
For retreat reservations and book orders: info@csa-davis.org
To e-mail Roy Eugene Davis: rd@csa-davis.org
Web site: www.csa-davis.org

When Paramahansa Yogananda was asked why he devoted early morning hours to meditation, he said, "How can I share the Spirit of God with others if I am not saturated [completely filled] with it?"

How to Be Completely Committed to an Authentic Spiritual Path

complete Total, absolute, final. The greatest possible extent.
commitment Dedication to a purpose, cause, or activity.
authentic Genuine, true, provable.
spiritual path A course of study and actions that enable one to realize (personally experience and accurately know) their real nature (pure essence) and ultimate Reality.

The word spirit is from Latin *spiritus*, "breath" or that which enlivens. Also from an early Indo-European word used to refer to the pure essence of something. Many philosophical systems define the soul or spirit that animates life forms as being other than mental or physical.

The major purposes for being completely committed to an authentic spiritual path are to 1) learn about higher realities; 2) purify the mind and clarify awareness; 3) remove, renounce, or transcend conditions that interfere with being emotionally mature and Self-realized; 4) be fully spiritually enlightened.

Although preliminary learning, right living, and meditation practices may enable a person to be physically and psychologically healthier and live more effectively, unless spiritual awakening is nurtured the innate urge to be enlightened and liberated may be frustrated. A condition described as "divine discontent" may result in thoughts and feelings of confusion, of not being or doing what one should be and do.

The solution to that problem is to think rationally, pray or hope for guidance or insight, be optimistically imaginative, and explore possibilities for discovering and bringing forth innate qualities and powers by acquiring useful knowledge and wisely using it. Indications of improvement are clarity of awareness, enthusiasm, and having worthwhile purposes to accomplish.

The most worthwhile accomplishment is to be fully Self-realized because that will enable all aspects of life to be ideal, provide permanent soul or Self-contentment, and beneficially influence the collective consciousness of all forms and expressions of life in the universe.

Folklore, oral traditions, and written records indicate that practical information about how to live effectively and nurture spiritual growth has been known for thousands of years. Why have so few people been aware of it, or skillfully used it? Even in our current era, with computers and phones that enable information to be shared with the speed of light, and some truth teachers who are personally accessible, only a small number of people among billions on our planet know how to nurture their spiritual growth and even fewer are completely committed to doing it. Many people are not yet intelligent enough to understand higher realities. Some could understand if they wanted to do so, but are more interested in having an ordinary life and relationships. Among those who say they are committed to an authentic spiritual path, many are inclined to allow habitual ways of thinking and behaving to be influential, are confused about what to believe or do, or don't do what they know they should do.

The way to nurture spiritual awakening is to be ethical in thinking and behaviors; think and live constructively; learn the truth about, and experience, one's true nature; purify the ego (the mistakenly perceived sense of self-identity); improve powers of discriminative intelligence; think rationally; replace erroneous ideas with knowledge of what is true; and meditate and use discernment to clarify awareness.

Yoga teachers refer to these practices as *kriyas* (actions or procedures) and *yoga* (unifying attention and awareness with one's essence). Similar procedures have been taught in many cultures and are the basis of all authentic spiritual paths.

The practices are useful. Names of systems and procedures and the cultural characteristics are not important. Spiritually enlightened people transmit but do not originate the teachings.

Fully spiritually enlightened people teach without cultural

or traditional bias (prejudice, or claims of having exclusive or secret teachings). Because their understanding is universal, they acknowledge only one Reality, view everyone as a unit of the pure essence of that Reality, and inspire, and encourage others to consciously experience their true nature.

For an authentic spiritual path to be of practical value, right, concentrated endeavors to adhere to the recommended lifestyle regimens and meditation practices are necessary. Having reliable information about what to do is not helpful until it is effectively used to have beneficial experiences that provide personal knowledge.

During my first private talk with Paramahansa Yogananda in late 1949 and after he accepted me as a disciple, I was with him several times during informal meetings with a few brother disciples. Approximately six weeks later he sent me to the SRF center in Phoenix, Arizona, and told me to visit him every two months for private instruction, which I did until a few weeks before he passed on March 7, 1952.

In Arizona, I adhered to regular schedules of early morning and evening meditation practice, kept the building and rooms clean, mowed the grass, swept the sidewalks, answered the telephone, and eventually began to conduct a Sunday evening discussion group on basic Kriya Yoga philosophy and practices. In 1951 I occasionally conducted Sunday morning and Thursday evening services. After Master passed I was the minister of the Phoenix center for two years. Those four years provided me with seclusion and privacy that enabled me to devote almost all of my attention to profound meditation and cultivation of conscious awareness of God (nameless, formless ultimate Reality).

During those four years, except when I visited Master every 60 days, I didn't have, or want, discussions about my spiritual practices with anyone. Focused on learning and on meditation practice, I enjoyed being alone and mostly silent.

Swami Sri Yukteswar emphasized total dedication to Kriya Yoga practices. According to Swami Satyananda, one of his disciples, he told them:

"Listen: there is no value in blindly believing that when I touch you, you will be saved, or that a heavenly chariot will be waiting for you. Because of the guru's attunement [with ultimate Reality and the disciple] the touch helps in the blossoming of knowledge. Respecting [being thankful for] this blessing, you must yourself become wise and proceed to be Self-realized by applying the methods of spiritual practice given by the guru."

Most people aren't able to schedule long periods of time for profound study and deep meditation. They can, however, read for a few minutes to acquire useful information, meditate for 30 minutes to one hour—or a little longer on weekends—and cultivate awareness of their true nature and ultimate Reality when performing duties and interacting with others.

Because ultimate Reality is always simultaneously present everywhere, wherever we are in space and time we are in it. To think of it as being separate from us or our environment is a mistake. We don't have to "find God." If we are not yet aware of ultimate Reality we only have to acknowledge it. Likewise, we don't have to learn to become spiritual; we can acknowledge our pure essence and be aware of it.

It is helpful to maintain a consistent understanding of your true nature and ultimate Reality. Don't wonder if you have a soul. You *are* a soul—a flawless unit of the pure essence of Ultimate Reality—expressing through an intellect, mind, and a small sense of self-identity.

Don't waver regarding your acknowledgement of ultimate Reality as being nameless and formless with a pure essence and an expressive aspect with attributes, rather than a cosmic being with personality characteristics.

> Discard the false idea that there is a separation
> between spiritual and material realities.
> *– Paramahansa Yogananda (1893 – 1952)*

Some people say it is not easy for them to discard mental concepts of God they acquired before they were informed about ultimate Reality. They want to awaken to pure, transcendent Self-realization but are reluctant to let go of traditional ideas

and feelings. The solution to the problem is to nurture spiritual awakening that results in Self-realization. There will then be no need to try to disbelieve what is not true or to hope to comprehend ultimate Reality with the mind or intellect.

When contemplating what others say about philosophical or religious ideas and spiritual practices, be patient. Allow your innate knowing to be revealed. Sri Yukteswar compared patience with soul- or Self-contentment, which can be cultivated and experienced before higher understanding and revealing insights are had. Learning to be mentally and emotionally calm in all situations is one of the practices recommended in *Patanjali's Yoga-Sutras* (1:37).

Self-contentment can be maintained by observing thoughts, feelings, behaviors, and changes of transitory events. To do this, first be aware of your pure essence at the innermost level of your being. Discern the difference between what you are as an observer and the changeable thoughts, moods, and personality characteristics with which you may be inclined to be identified when you are not Self-aware.

With intellectual discernment, intuition, and reason-based rational thinking, improve your awareness of your spiritual essence. Using intellect, intuition, reason, and imagination to be above small, narrow-minded ways of thinking, self-centered moods, and harmful or nonuseful habits is just as necessary and important as other spiritual practices. If limiting conditions are allowed to prevail, unless transformative insights and changes occur, endeavors to nurture spiritual awakening will be difficult.

Contemplating the ideal of transcendence at the crown chakra, one may have direct perception of ultimate Reality. From that sudden perception, knowledge of it is revealed.
– Patanjali's Yoga-Sutras 3:33,34

Kriya Yoga Philosophy, Traditions, and Practices

Send questions or inquiries for possible use in a future issue by mail or e-mail rd@csa-davis.org

Would it be spiritually helpful to live in a spiritual community or an ashram for a few weeks, months, or years?

Being in such a place for a few days or weeks can be helpful but a long-term stay is not necessary unless you know it to be "where you belong" in the universe. Use a quiet environment to be inward and to profoundly study and meditate rather than be emotionally dependent on the company of others. The easiest way to study and meditate is to do it where you live while skillfully performing duties and accomplishing purposes that are of value to you, others, and the environment.

Although Paramahansa Yogananda talked about the value of planned communities, I think he did it to encourage some people to be economically secure and have the support of spiritual friends. In 1936 he invited people to contact him if they were interested in starting such a project in India and in the early 1950s the SRF retreat in Encinitas was called a "World Brotherhood Colony."

When I contemplate Om, when it seems that I am at a stage where I might experience pure awareness, I resist doing it and come "down" or out of meditation. What should I do?

Surrender. Observe whatever occurs. You are always what you are as a unit of pure consciousness. Adjustments of states of awareness or viewpoints don't change your essence.

Don't try to have dramatic meditative perceptions such as visions, ecstatic feelings, or out-of-body sensations. Be calmly attentive while changes in your mind and awareness become fewer, your awareness is clear, and you are more alert.

Paramahansa Yogananda *March 7, 1952*

Several unpleasant events occurred when I was very young, and since then, the memories cause emotional pain, mental conflicts, and erratic behaviors. Are such memories part of my karmic condition? How can I be free from their influences?

Any subjective condition that influences an action or effect is karmic. We don't have to "own" or cling to karmic conditions; they can be neutralized, discarded, or transcended. Master told his disciples, "Don't say that you have karma!"

What occurred, whether recently or many years ago, cannot influence you without your permission. If you were physically harmed, rejected, bullied, ignored, or mistreated in other ways, forgive, release the pain, and go forward. If you made mistakes or misbehaved, forgive yourself and go forward.

Grow to emotional maturity by being wisely responsible for how you think and feel and what you do. If you think you need to have professional help, obtain it, while being firmly resolved to quickly be effectively functional rather than needing many months to "recover." Allowing yourself to be strongly influenced by memories of painful events is like being addicted to habits or substances. The solution is to control your mental attitude, emotions, and behaviors. As a spiritual being, you are superior to your mind, memories, emotions, and actions.

How can we avoid being distracted from what we are doing or intend to do?

Distractions can be avoided by being intentionally motivated to do what you think, or know, to be of greater worth or value. Focus attention and actions on accomplishing useful purposes rather than being indecisive or overly attracted to situations or relationships that merely stimulate the mind, senses, or emotions, or are superficial. Although daily, deep meditation will help keep the mind calm and thinking and behaviors controlled, it is also necessary to make right choices and act constructively.

Be higher purpose-directed: impelled from the inner level of your being to wisely think, act, and learn. Aspire to steadily grow to emotional and spiritual maturity as soon as possible and

be fully committed to the process.

Be very curious. Want to know all that is worth knowing and to experience and express excellence in all aspects of your life. Don't be complacently satisfied by thinking, feeling, or acting as though you don't need to continue to learn or improve your understanding or your circumstances. Endeavor to bring forth all of your innate qualities, powers, and knowledge.

Remember these words by the British journalist and writer Rudyard Kipling (1865 – 1936):

> I have six honest serving men, they taught me everything
> I knew, their names are *what* and *why* and *when* and *how*
> and *where* and *who*.

What do you want to accomplish? *Why*? *When*? *How* will you do it? *Where*? You know *who* you are when you are Self-realized.

Does anyone have all of the answers to questions about what happens to us when we depart from this world? If we continue to live after biological death, what experiences will we have? How can we prepare for it?

Most of the available information about this subject represents various opinions people have had, or have. Biological death is certain for most forms of life on our planet. Where the departed souls go and what they experience and do isn't known. Some people who are thought to be enlightened tell of astral, causal, and celestial realms that exist as temporary dwelling places, but no one has actually returned to describe or confirm them.

Belief that life continues in another realm or dimension is common. Most people cannot imagine, or don't want to try to imagine, not existing.

Many teachers of enlightenment traditions declare that the best way to prepare for inevitable, future physical demise is to nurture spiritual awareness until it is completely clear. When prepared to leave the body, bring attention and life forces up to the spiritual eye and crown chakra and be fully aware of being pure, conscious existence.

Although there are legends of "mortal immortals" who have

been physically embodied for hundreds, or thousands, of years, their existence cannot be verified because they are said to be secluded. For centuries, in various countries, some people tried to discover foods, herbs, or lifestyle regimens that might extend human life. In Asia and Europe essences of metals such as mercury that were used caused researchers to get sick and die.

In India, *kaya* (physical body) *kalpa* (extension of duration of life) regimens were sometimes used that included purification, massage, regulated diet with special herbs, complete rest for weeks or months, and sustained superconscious meditation. A secluded environment without any possibility of interference or distraction of attention was emphasized as being necessary. I read about one man who lived to the age of 136 and another one who was 185 years old when he meditatively left his body. Both were yogis who easily experienced nirvikalpa (beyond the constraints of time and other objective conditions) samadhi.

A common opinion among many spiritual teachers is that where we are in space-time is not as important as our habitual mental attitude and clarity of awareness.

As units of the pure essence of the one ultimate Reality we are immortal. This fact can be fully realized (experienced and accurately known). When it *is* fully, flawlessly realized, we are spiritually enlightened and there is nothing more to know.

While contemplating physical death and ideas about life that follow, be receptive to insights that emerge from within you while avoiding fantasy, wishful thinking, or inclinations to try to believe what others have said, or say. Carefully examine what people who may be enlightened say to discern if it is true or only an opinion or traditional belief.

Don't believe that people in other realms are mentally or intuitively influencing your thoughts, moods, behaviors, and circumstances. Be aware of your pure essence and improve your understanding of your relationship with ultimate Reality.

It is estimated that 360,000 people are born each day in our world and 55,000 die. During the past year 45,000 people died in the United States because of overdosing on drugs.

Physical births and deaths are not origins and endings of our existence; they are incidents of identifying with matter and having attention and awareness removed from it.

Be An Emotionally Mature Kriya Yogi

Cultivate Self-confidence and Self-reliance. The word Self with a capital *S* is used to indicate our real nature as a unit of the pure essence of ultimate Reality.

Improve your powers of discriminative intelligence to know the difference between your essence, mind, feelings, and small sense of self-identity—and to accurately comprehend what you observe or think about.

Think rationally. Use reason, common sense, intuition, and imagination to solve problems, plan effective actions, and make practical decisions.

Live wisely in harmony with natural laws.

Behave properly. Master often reminded disciples to always "be cheerful but grave (poised, emotionally calm, with appropriate good manners."

Act skillfully to accomplish purposes efficiently.

Discard false ideas. Replace them with accurate knowledge.

Believe only what is true.

Audibly and mentally affirm (declare} with conviction until you realize (clearly experience and vividly know):

There is only one ultimate Reality.
I am a flawless, immortal unit of the
pure essence of ultimate Reality.

Frequently do it until you are aware of your true nature at all times and in all circumstances.

Meditate to have the psychological and physical benefits and to be Self-realized.

Right, effective living requires complete commitment to performing actions (kriyas) that produce or attract constructive results and enable us to be receptive to transformative actions that can spontaneously occur.

When we sincerely endeavor to clarify our awareness, our innate urge to be fully conscious causes beneficial changes in our body and mind that allows the innate qualities, powers, and higher knowledge of our essence to be Self-revealed.

An obstacle to being Self-realized is the acquired habit of thinking and acting like a normal or ordinary, limited human being instead of as a freely expressive spiritual being.

How often do you think and act like that? Are you confined by negative mental attitudes, moods, flawed beliefs or opinions, improper behaviors, or ineffective actions? Do you think or feel that being spiritually enlightened is not possible or only hope that it may occur in the distant future? Do you think that you might have a lot of bad karma to overcome, have been traumatized and psychologically damaged by past unfortunate events, astrological influences aren't favorable, are addicted to habits or substances, or aren't intelligent enough to learn what you need to learn or do what you need to do? When you meditate, do you expect to experience superconsciousness—or are you inclined to be passive, inattentive, or involved with thoughts, moods, and memories?

Replace limiting or troublesome thoughts, feelings, habits, and behaviors with constructive mental attitudes and wisely chosen, skillfully performed actions.

Restless thoughts are caused by restless prana.
– Lahiri Mahasaya (1828 – 1895)

Attentive *prana-* (life force) *yama* (expansion) practice calms vital forces, mental processes, and emotions to allow our pure essence to be unveiled. Use the kriya pranayama you learned when you were initiated. Alternate nostril breathing can be used before meditating to elicit mental alertness.

Some spiritual aspirants overlook the value of improving their knowledge of philosophical concepts, adhering to healthy lifestyle regimens, and experimenting with forms of meditation to learn the relationships between physical relaxation, slower breathing, mental calmness, and clarity of awareness. Instead, they plunge into meditation with emotional intensity trying to

forcibly control the mind, arouse vital forces, and elicit pleasant feelings or altered states of awareness. They want to be in complete control instead of arranging conditions so that their innate urge to be Self-aware can be influential.

Just as part of the expressive aspect of ultimate Reality can be modified when blended somewhat with primordial nature (Sanskrit *maya* in which time, space, and fine cosmic particles appear in Om), so our awareness can be somewhat modified by being influenced by restless waves of movements (*vrittis*).

When our awareness is clarified by meditative pranayama practice, focused concentration, or transcendence, it is then removed from the changes, modifications, and distortions that ordinarily occur.

Pranayama is often the easiest way to clarify awareness because it is an action (*kriya*) to perform to have the results we want. Surrendered contemplation with devotion, meditating in Om, and aspiring to experience pure existence are also useful ways that calm movements in mind and awareness or enable us to transcend them.

With wise use of the knowledge we have we can choose to do constructive things to avoid conditions that trouble the lives of many people whose circumstances are ordinary and quicken our spiritual awakening. Insights and other transformative events that might occurr over a period of several years can be experienced much sooner and more frequently.

Few people know that the wholeness of ultimate Reality pervades the universe.
– *Mahavatar Babaji*

FLORIDA (January) & CALIFORNIA (March)

2019

MEDITATION SEMINARS
and Kriya Yoga Initiation
with Roy Eugene Davis

Donation Basis Invite Spiritual Friends Arrive Early

West Palm Beach, Florida Sunday, January 13

10 a.m. to 4 p.m. (lunch break 11:30 - 12:45 p.m.)

EMBASSY SUITES HOTEL

1601 Belvedere Road (near the airport)

Kriya Yoga initiation at 2 p.m. for everyone who is inclined to be sincerely dedicated to their spiritual path.

Pick up a copy of *In the Sanctuary of Silence* (32 page meditation instruction booklet) at the Free Literature table. Mr. Davis' book ***Paramahansa Yogananda As I Knew Him*** will be available at the seminar at a special price of $5.00.

Sponsored by Center for Spiritual Awareness

706-782-4723 weekdays **info@csa-davis.org**

www.csa-davis.org

San Jose, California Saturday, March 23

10 a.m. to 4 p.m. (Kriya Yoga initiation 2 p.m.)

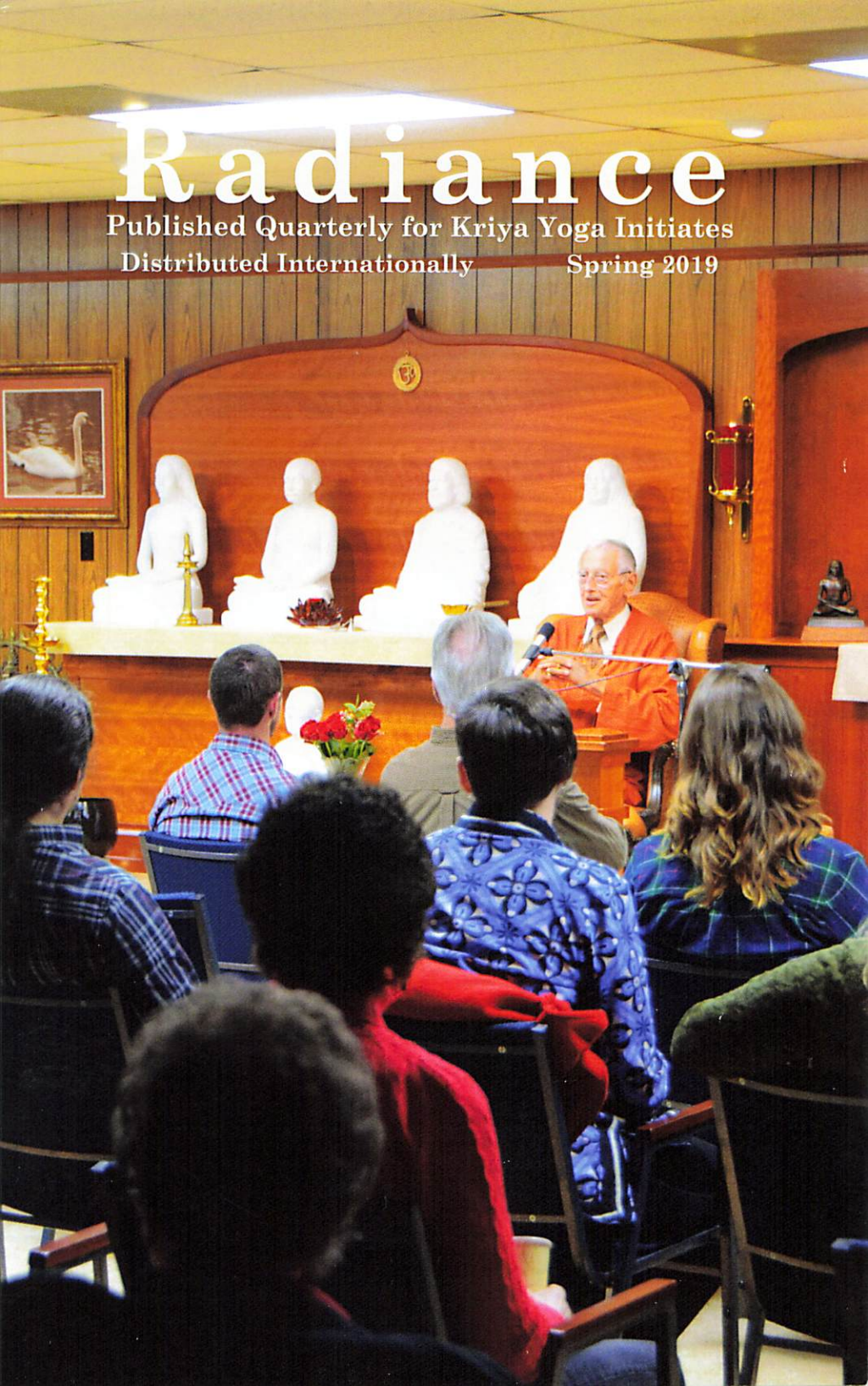
CENTER FOR SPIRITUAL ENLIGHTENMENT

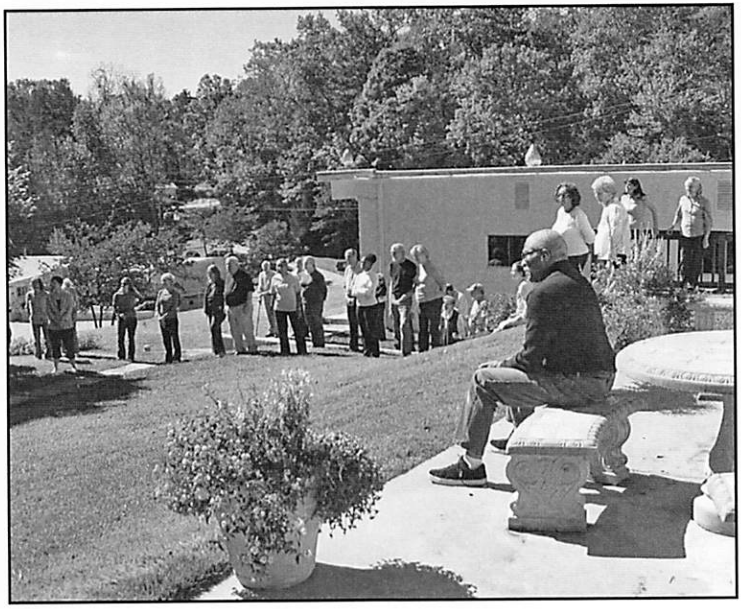
1146 University Avenue

408-283-0221 info@csecenter.org wwwcsecenter.org

Radiance

Published Quarterly for Kriya Yoga Initiates
Distributed Internationally Spring 2019





View from the CSA Bookstore patio during a short seminar rest break. *Summer 2005*

Front cover photo: At our annual Holy Season Meditation. December 1, 2018.

copyright 2019 © Center for Spiritual Awareness
Written by Roy Eugene Davis for initiates in the Kriya Yoga tradition represented by Mahavatar Babaji, Lahiri Mahasaya, Sri Yukteswar, Paramahansa Yogananda, and their successors.
Published quarterly. Subscription in the U.S. 1 year, $8.00.
Foreign $10.00, airmailed.
Center for Spiritual Awareness P. O. Box 7 Lakemont, Georgia 30552
Offices and Retreat Center on CSA Lane off Lake Rabun Road.
Tel: 706-782-4723 weekdays 8 a.m. – 3 p.m. Fax: 706-782-4560
For retreat reservations and book orders: info@csa-davis.org
To e-mail Roy Eugene Davis: rd@csa-davis.org
Web site: www.csa-davis.org

Life has to be lived. Why not live it in the highest way?
– Paramahansa Yogananda (1893 – 1953)

The Spiritual Value of Understanding Basic Philosophical Concepts

The word *ego* is derived from German *das icht*, "the I"—a sense of individual self-identity. It was frequently used by Sigmund Freud (1856 – 1939), a German-born neurologist in Austria who had people with psychological problems talk about their dysfunctional behaviors as a way to understand and heal them.

The Greek word *psyche* ("soul" or spiritual essence) is often incorrectly defined by western psychologists as "mind." We are not a mind that accumulates impressions (memories) of our perceptions; we use it to remember, think, and imagine.

Freud also used the word *id* for instinctual inclinations and *super-ego* for the faculty of intelligence used to regulate instincts and determine moral or proper behaviors.

An ego is a viewpoint from which we can view external events and subjective mental and emotional states, and relate to them. The ego of most people is modified and distorted by memories, opinions, and changing emotions.

Confusion about what an ego is, is common. Word sources sometimes mistakenly define it as self-esteem, self-admiration, confidence, or an attitude of pride. Some people think that their ego must be banished or transcended to allow spiritual enlightenment to be experienced. Although ego-identification is absent during meditative transcendence, we express through it when we interact with events and relationships. When we are Self-aware, we express *through* our ego, not *as* it.

It is helpful to clearly define words we use.

Ego is a misperception of self-identity. An understanding of it can enable us to creatively express with and through it.

Egoism is strong identification with our ego. It confines our awareness, limits functional abilities, may result in neurotic mental attitudes and behaviors, and is the basic cause of lack of spiritual awareness or Self-forgetfulness.

Egotism is an inflated or exaggerated attitude of self-importance, often characterized by arrogance, pride, willfulness, and inclinations to dominate or control circumstances and/or the thoughts, emotions, and behaviors of others.

Rather than renounce ego, we can learn to express through it while being inwardly established in Self-awareness.

Egoism can be dissolved by improving our knowledge of our true nature and ultimate Reality

Egotism can be cured by acknowledging its uselessness and growing to emotional and spiritual maturity.

The Sanskrit word for *ego* is *ahamkara* (verb root *kr* for "action" or a cause that produces an effect, and *aham*, "I-ness"). It is said to have three aspects. Influenced by *sattwa guna*, it is pure. Influenced by *rajas guna*, it is passionate and prideful. Influenced by *tamas guna,* it is not conscious of its essence. Gunas are attributes of the expressive aspect of ultimate Reality that also pervade the Om vibration, the universe, and forms of life.

A *personality* is composed of characteristics that distinguish an individual especially in relationships with others. It may also represent an individual's behavioral and emotional tendencies. The Latin word *persona* means a "mask" worn by stage actors to indicate their social role and characteristics. The appearance of personality characteristics may not reveal a person's inner condition. A superficial display of confidence and well-being may somewhat conceal the fact that a person may be "laughing on the outside but crying on the inside." A person who appears to be kind and courteous may be selfish and manipulative.

The four components of individualized Self-consciousness are: 1) *awareness* of existing or being; 2) *ego* which confines awareness; 3) *mind* that enables thinking; 4) *intellect* used to discriminate. When awareness is unclear, thinking is irrational, and intelligence is blurred, our pure nature is concealed.

Our excessive identification with external events and the blurring of our awareness was not a personal conscious, willful act or fault. It was a mistake because of an intellectual error that resulted from an inability to accurately discern the differ-

ence between our pure essence and influences that modified and distorted our awareness.

Awakening that can restore our awareness to its original, pure wholeness can begin to occur when our innate urge to be fully conscious becomes influential. Or it can begin when we acknowledge that we need to nurture spiritual awareness and learn to do it, when we are informed about higher realities and how to know them, or when we encounter a spiritually awake person whose presence, helpfulness, and wisdom awakens our soul forces and helps to clarify our awareness. Two strong influences that can quicken spiritual awakening and attract helpful circumstances are a constant, sincere desire to be fully Self-realized and creative endeavors to comprehend higher realities and experience our true nature.

Don't Merely *Pretend* to Be Humble

Humility is absence of egoism and egotism. Pretending to be humble by dramatizing mental attitudes and behaviors of helplessness, unworthiness, or extreme renunciation is foolish, self-limiting, and doesn't contribute to spiritual growth. It may even strengthen an identification with a small sense of self and nurture thoughts and feelings of pride because of a false or flawed dedication to a spiritual path.

Rather than pretend to be humble, *be humble,* and quietly attend to your duties, spiritual studies, and regular meditation sessions. Remember what Lahiri Mahasaya told his disciples: regarding spiritual practice: "Doing, doing—one day, done!"

Improve your intellectual understanding and intuitive perceptions of ultimate Reality and its absolute or pure aspect and its expressive aspect with attributes that manifest universes. Avoid thinking about God as a cosmic being with human-like personality characteristics and inclinations.

If you like to perform religious rituals, chant, or pray to or imagine a personal form of ultimate Reality to elicit feelings or an awareness of what seems to be a divine presence, know why you do it and use common sense. Don't indulge in fantasy or believe what isn't true.

Pleasurable meditative perceptions aren't indications of Self-realization or God-communion. I have known several people who said they frequently had profound meditative experiences who weren't exceptionally intelligent, emotionally stable, or functionally effective. Others said they were sincerely devoted to their spiritual path and had liberation of consciousness as their ultimate aim, but had much "bad" karma to overcome before they could be spiritually enlightened.

Also, avoid thinking, or hoping, that using a specific meditation technique or routine will result in quick enlightenment. How many people do you know who are spiritually conscious because of having used those methods? If you use them, what kind of results are you having?

Awakening to Absolute Self-Realization That Liberates Consciousness

Only complete realization (actual experience and accurate knowledge) of our immortal pure essence can free us from false ideas, flawed perceptions, and various conditions that modify, blur, and distort the mind and awareness. Awakening to that free state of consciousness is the purpose of practicing kriyas (actions or procedures) that culminate in *yoga* (firm unification of attention and awareness with our pure essence).

Kriya Yoga as described in Patanjali's *Yoga-Sutras* has become well known during the past few decades. It isn't easy for many yoga students to understand because they cannot comprehend the philosophical principles or are not motivated to adopt the lifestyle routines and meditation methods. Some try to mix various philosophical ideas and spiritual practices and are confused rather than enlightened. Some readers have difficulty understanding the text because various editions have different translations and commentaries.

Paramahansa Yogananda made Kriya Yoga teachings and practices widely known in the United States from 1920 until he passed in 1952. Later, other teachers in lineages that started with Babaji, Lahiri Mahasaya, or Sri Yukteswar but were not affiliated with Self-Realization Fellowship, visited the United

States and Europe. Although they taught basic philosophical principles and meditation methods, some taught them a little differently, according to how they learned from their teachers, their own experiences and insights, and what they thought was most useful for their disciples to practice.

Some initiates were told to pull the current up through the astral channel in the spine (*sushumna nadi*, "the radiant path") to the spiritual eye, then to the higher brain, and let it flow down, mentally chanting a specific mantra at each chakra when ascending and descending. Many were not able to be aware of prana flows in the spine while trying to remember the mantras and where to mentally imagine them. Some were told to mentally picture specific flows of prana, which isn't necessary because it can only flow through existing channels. Feeling flows of prana is more useful than endeavors to visualize them.

Avoid forcible pranayama practice. Don't inhale too deeply, too fast or too slow, or pause a long time after inhalation or exhalation, mistakenly thinking that stoppage of breathing might result in thought-free awareness or samadhi.

When meditating, regardless of the form of practice or the technique being used, remember that the ideal result is to have thoughts and movements in mind and awareness stilled to the extent that awareness is completely clear and Self-knowing is possible. Before then, there may be perceptions of light, peacefulness, enjoyment, or a sense of communion or identification with a larger Reality. Perceptions that are changeable can be observed and experienced for a while, then transcended.

The furthest extent of awakening is pure being or existence without attributes or characteristics. When you are "there" you will be comfortable and fulfilled.

To be *enlightened* is to have knowledge about something. Spiritual enlightenment provides knowledge of our true nature and of ultimate Reality and its manifestations.

Effective Kriya Yoga practices purify the intellectual faculty, mind, emotions, and awareness; elicit innate qualities and Self-knowledge; and allow growing to emotional and spiritual maturity to naturally occur. For beneficial changes to occur, it is

helpful for devotees to be willing to be responsible for how they think, what they do, and for the results of their mental states and actions.

The intellectual faculty can be purified by discarding false ideas and flawed opinions and improving powers of concentration, perception, and discernment. The mind can be purified by cultivating mental calmness, rational thinking, and eliminating troublesome subconscious influences. Emotions can be purified by cultivating Self-contentment in all circumstances. Regular superconscious meditation purifies the intellect, mind, and emotions, and improves physical health.

Other beneficial influences are faith or conviction regarding our spiritual practices, sustained aspiration to be enlightened, and constant awareness of our spiritual essence and ultimate Reality. The aim should be to completely awaken from levels of self-consciousness to permanent Self-realization as soon as possible. Awakening to Self-realization is unlikely to occur if a person is not willing to outgrow or renounce ordinary states of mind and consciousness and self-centered interests and behaviors in order to be aware of higher realities.

When there are no attachments to superconscious states or perceptions of omnipotence and omniscience, and all traces of subliminal restrictions have been removed, pure realization prevails. Upon awakening to Self-knowledge there must be no trace of pride of attainment or attachments to prior conditions as this might result in a return to former states of [modified] awareness.

– Patanjali's Yoga-Sutras 3:51,52

Dialogue

Kriya Yoga Philosophy, Traditions, and Practices

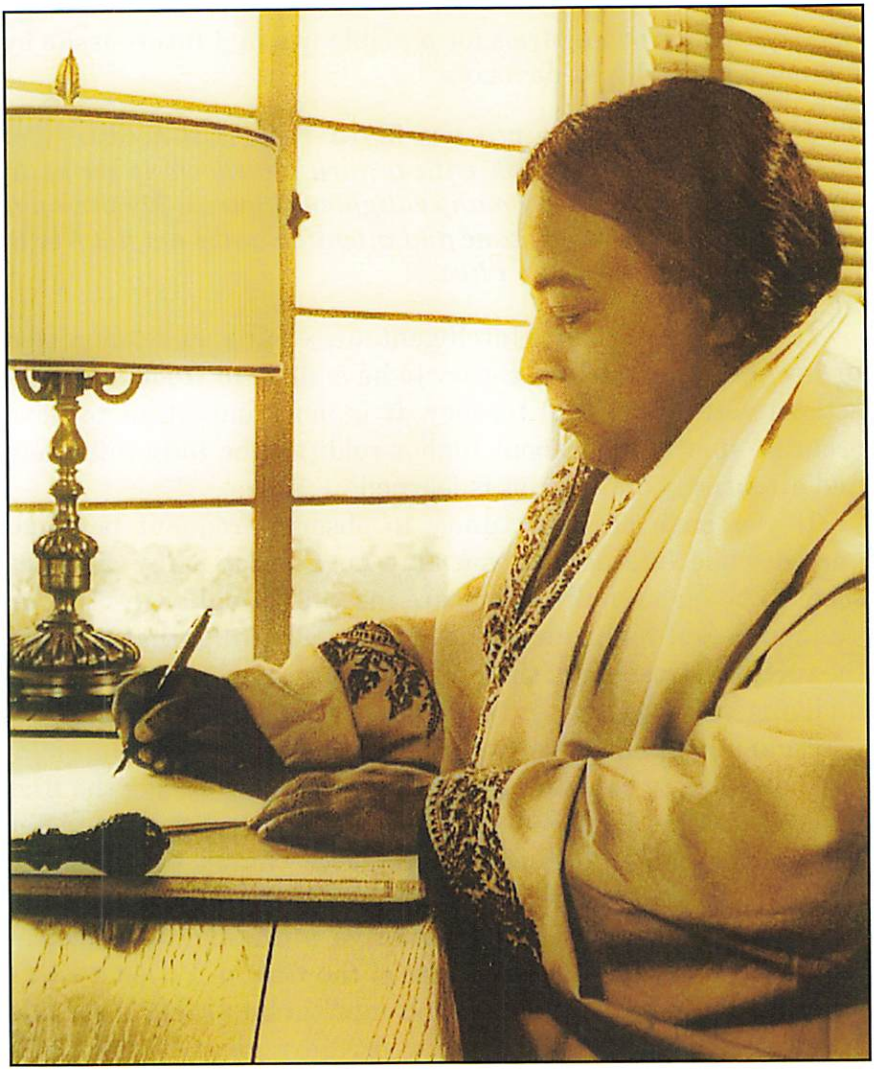
Send questions or inquiries for possible use in a future issue by mail or e-mail rd@csa-davis.org

To learn and effectively practice Kriya Yoga is it necessary to have a frequent interaction with a guru (teacher)? It seems to me that there are not very many enlightened gurus. My personal duties require most of my time and attention and I am not free to travel very far from where I live.

If you are sufficiently intelligent, discerning, and committed to discipleship it isn't necessary to have daily or frequent interactions with a spiritual teacher. It is more important to have accurate information about higher realities, be fully informed, and attentively apply what is learned.

If you have an opportunity to observe frequent personal guru-disciple interactions you may notice that many disciples seem to be emotionally immature instead of highly resolved to awaken to Self-realization. They mistakenly think that being in the physical presence of their guru is more important than skillful living, self-inquiry, study of higher realities, meditation practice, and other endeavors to be spiritually enlightened.

I was able to be with my guru several times during the first few weeks after I arrived at SRF headquarters in 1949. After he sent me to the Phoenix, Arizona, SRF church I returned to California every two months for private times with him and to attend special functions such as Kriya initiations and dedications of various new centers. Most of the time in Phoenix I was focused entirely on my duties and meditation practice. A little less than two years after meeting my guru he ordained me to represent this Kriya Yoga tradition, which I began to do in 1952 when I assumed my new role as the minister of the SRF church in Phoenix. My progress from discovering this spiritual path to representing it was unusually fast because I learned quickly and Master trained me.



Paramahansa Yogananda (1893 – 1952)
Early 1940s

I was recently told that Paramahansa Yogananda reincarnated a few years ago and is now teaching in California and in other places. What should I believe about such stories?

Don't believe them. In early 1950 I heard him say, "After I go, I will be with Babaji in space and in the Himalayas." He implied that he might "return" to play a public role, but didn't provide specific details. I know of at least two individuals who have claimed to be him and of several who say they are able to receive telepathic messages from him. If they really believe they are Yogananda they are mistaken or delusional. If otherwise, they are deceptive and self-serving. It is unfortunate that some of them have attracted followings of naive believers.

Some emotionally immature "devotees" are inclined to want to believe in strange or useless teachings and practices. A few years ago a person told me her teacher was an avatar because he (the teacher) said he was. For hundreds of years, in various parts of the world there have been people who said (or their followers said) they had divine powers, higher knowledge, a special mission to fulfill, or were channels through which one or several enlightened teachers expressed. Most of them have been forgotten. There have been a few enlightened people who were good role models and shared useful information. What is to be learned from their example is to awaken and actualize our own innate qualities, functional capacities, and knowledge of our true nature and ultimate Reality.

How can we effectively attend to spiritual studies and practices while performing secular duties and accomplishing purposes that are of value to us and to others?

Have specific schedules for metaphysical study, meditation, private reflection, wellness routines, work, family interactions, social events, rest, recreation, and other activities that are necessary or useful. Skillfully do what needs to be done. Wisely manage material resources. Act for your highest good and the highest good of others and the environment. View everything you do as spiritual practice. Be fully aware, alert, and attentive.

I learned meditation methods from an organization that teaches specific routines. When I use the complete series of techniques, there isn't enough time to peacefully rest in deep silence. What should I do? I want to have more satisfying meditations.

When you are able to use the methods effectively, do what is necessary to concentrate effectively and calm the mind until meditation is easy and awareness is pure and not supported by thoughts, moods, visual phenomena, or other sensations or perceptions. Use pranayamas and other techniques from time to time to improve concentration and/or to arouse your vital forces. After meditating, endeavor to continue to be calmly Self-aware.

Are some meditation mantras more beneficial or "sacred" than others? Would it be helpful to have a mantra that is chosen for me by a spiritually advanced person? Should only one mantra be used, or can different mantras be used from time to time?

The word mantra is derived from Sanskrit *manah* (mind or thinking faculty) and *tra* (to protect). Mantras may be mentally recited or be imagined as spontaneously emerging into a meditator's awareness. When given by a guru with intention, mantras may be thought to be more potent or useful. Of themselves, they are not secret or "sacred" words or sounds. They are words, phrases, or sounds used to attract and focus attention during meditation or for other purposes. One mantra can be used if it easily attracts our attention. Another mantra can be used if it helps to keep our awareness more attentive. Mantras can be Sanskrit words, ordinary words, or the sound of Om when it is imagined, heard, or contemplated.

An affirmation or prayer or a few words, mentally recited or imagined, can be used as a mantra. However a mantra is used, when attention is focused and awareness is clear, allow it to fade away. There is no need to pay hundreds or thousands of dollars for meditation instruction or techniques. Almost anyone who is sincerely interested in knowing how to meditate can be taught how to do it in less than an hour. After that, right practice will enable them to become proficient.

I know that much of what I was told about religion and God isn't true. I feel frustrated because I was misinformed and don't know what, or who, to believe. How can I go beyond this condition?

Be highly motivated to discover what is true by using your powers of discernment and attracting the useful information you want to have. Many philosophical and religious teachings are incomplete or flawed. Accept what is true and disregard opinions and rigid ideas. Don't blame others who didn't teach the truth because they didn't know it.

I am inclined to want to know all of the intricate details about higher realities, how universes are produced, causes of events that occur, and what other people think about God and life and death, and why? How can I possibly acquire all of the knowledge I want to have?

It's all right to be curious about life. While doing that, be sure to devote attention to nurturing Self-understanding and Self-realization that will provide knowledge that will illumine your mind and liberate your consciousness.

A Buddhist teaching emphasizes the importance of making wise choices. A story is told about a man who was wounded by an arrow. When his friends prepared to remove it, instead of allowing them to do it, he began to ask many questions. Of what material was the arrow made? How long is it? Who shot the arrow, and why did he do it? The injured man died before the arrow could be removed.

Acquire useful information, encourage innate knowledge to emerge, and devote enough attention to nurturing your spiritual growth to enable you to soon be enlightened.

Do insightful yogis believe in or acknowledge God or an aspect of ultimate Reality that produces and maintains universes, has attributes, and to which they pray and with which they relate?

Although ultimate Reality has an absolute or pure aspect, its expressive aspect with influential attributes (gunas) emanates the OM vibration from which universes are produced.

In early states of universal manifestation, influences of the expressive aspect of ultimate Reality produce an individualized aspect described as pure consciousness mixed with attributes or gunas, which regulates cosmic processes. In various texts including the *Yoga-Sutras*, it is called *Iswara*, a lord or ruler.

It is classified as ultimate Reality "with" attributes that enable it to influence universal processes without being influenced by what occurs. In the *Yoga-Sutras* (1:26–29) Patanjali defined it as the "teacher of the ancient teachers" and stated that OM is an indication of its existence. He then wrote that Om should be meditatively contemplated as a way to transcend modified states of mind and awareness.

Some yogis say that the individualized aspect of ultimate Reality may be experienced or perceived as knowledge, power, strength, mastery, vitality, splendor or radiance, and other ways, such as love, compassion, or an awareness of purity and wholeness. None of those perceptions are what that Reality is, but they may enable us to identify with it in ways which may somewhat satisfy a need for communion or closeness.

That aspect of ultimate Reality with attributes is the form of God or deity to which people pray. It can be contemplated, imagined, talked to, and invoked or invited into our awareness. An ancient reference to human endeavors to relate to it is in the Rig Veda where Sanskrit *huta* (invoke, implore, ask of, or call to) is used to indicate an appeal to a higher power.

Even though we can be aware of having a sense of closeness or relationship with that aspect of ultimate Reality, we will eventually see beyond it to what it represents. Until then, it is all right to pray to and endeavor to commune with it.

The cosmic individualized unit of the expressive aspect of ultimate Reality is also referred to as cosmic soul, oversoul, or supreme Self. It is thought of as God or the Supreme Being with the same components as ordinary souls (awareness, intelligence, mental faculties, and self-identity), which is why it may be said that we, as units of the pure essence of ultimate Reality, are like it. Prayer, devotion, affirmation, chanting, and meditative contemplation can help us be aware of it. Calming the mind and

clarifying awareness can enable us to directly realize (experience and know) it.

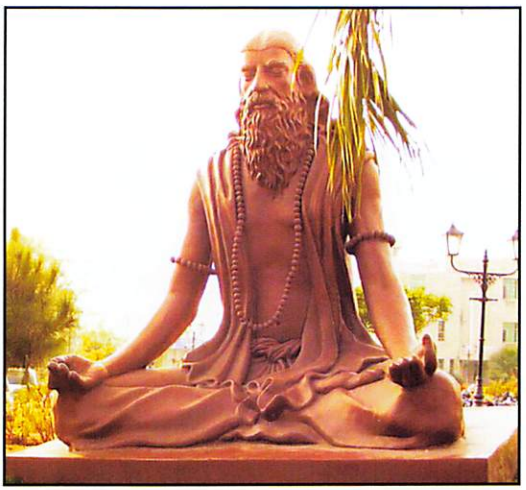
Ultimate Reality and its various aspects can be partially understood by thinking, somewhat known with intuition, and completely known when we are spiritually enlightened.

Many spiritual aspirants have a mental image of God that enables them to think and feel that Reality is approachable and with which they hope to have, an awareness of an intimate relationship. Having an understanding of that Reality can help us be aware of its omnipresence, omniscience, and omnipotence rather than imagine it as an abstract idea or distant from us.

It is helpful to remember that, from the aspect of ultimate Reality to the physical realms of the universe, only one Reality exists. Subtle influences in the expressive aspect of one Reality emanate forces that manifest universes and pervade them.

It should also be remembered that there are no evil forces in the universe. Everything that occurs has a prior cause that can be understood. By knowing how to wisely think and live, and doing it, most of the difficulties commonly experienced by some people can be avoided. Living can be enjoyable while we are steadily awakening to emotional and spiritual maturity.

Self- and God-realization are stages of awakening that can be experienced before spiritual enlightenment is permanent.



Statue of an artist's conception of Patanjali in Haridwar, India.

Denver, Colorado: Saturday, May 11

Breath: Its Influence on the Mind

4 p.m. – 6:45 p.m. Lectures by: Roy Eugene Davis and Swami Paramahansa Prajnanananda, a disciple of Swami Hariharananda, brother disciple of Paramahansa Yogananda. Hosted by Kriya Yoga Temple of Peace. $10 per person. 13 years and under free

Regis University, Claver Hall

3333 Regis Blvd. **Information: templeofpeace.co**

Atlanta: Sunday, May 26 2 p.m. – 4 p.m.

TWO-HOUR MEDITATION SEMINAR with Roy Eugene Davis

The Only Ordained (1951) Disciple of Paramahansa Yogananda Who is Still Actively Teaching

Atlanta Marriott Century Center Hotel

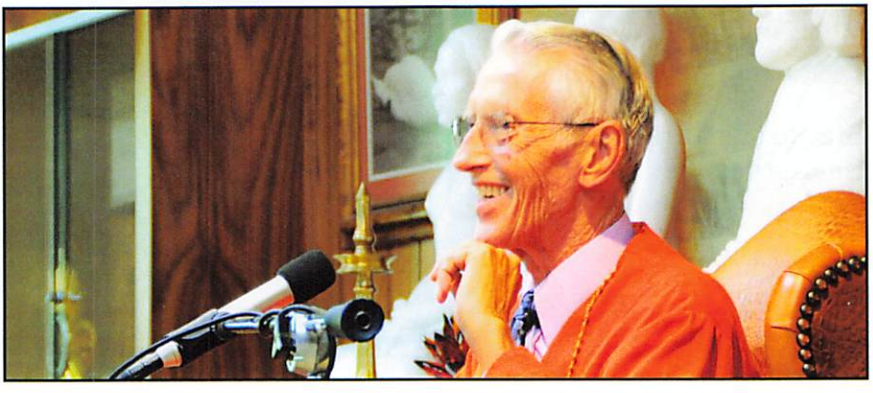
2000 Century Blvd NE (Continental Room A,B,C)

I-85 from North, Exit 91, turn right on Clairmont Road.
I-85 from South, Exit 91, turn left on Clairmont Road.
At the 3rd traffic light, turn right on Century Blvd.

Invite Your Spiritual Friends **Donation Basis**

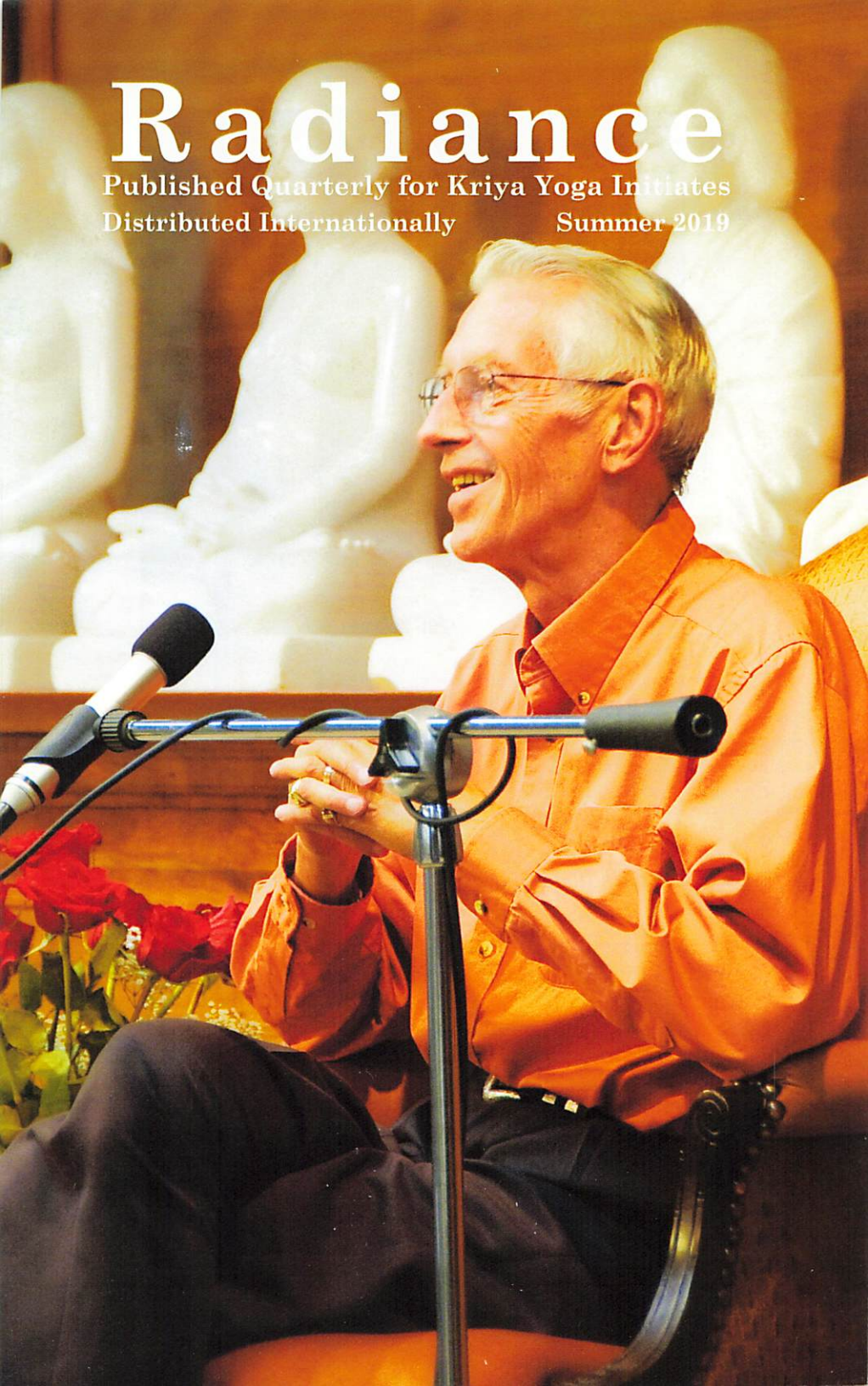
At the free literature table pick up a copy of *In the Sanctuary of Silence* (a 32 page meditation booklet) and *Truth Journal*

706-782-4723 weekdays **info@csa-davis.org** **www.csa-davis.org**



Radiance

Published Quarterly for Kriya Yoga Initiates
Distributed Internationally Summer 2019



Roy Eugene Davis
At *Redwood Glen Retreat, California, 1977*

copyright 2019 © Center for Spiritual Awareness
Written by Roy Eugene Davis for initiates in the Kriya Yoga
tradition represented by Mahavatar Babaji, Lahiri Mahasaya,
Sri Yukteswar, Paramahansa Yogananda, and their successors.
Published quarterly. Subscription in the U.S. 1 year, $8.00.
Foreign $10.00, airmailed.
Center for Spiritual Awareness P. O. Box 7 Lakemont, Georgia 30552
Offices and Retreat Center on CSA Lane off Lake Rabun Road.
Tel: 706-782-4723 weekdays 8 a.m. – 3 p.m. Fax: 706-782-4560
For retreat reservations and book orders: info@csa-davis.org
To e-mail Roy Eugene Davis: rd@csa-davis.org
Web site: www.csa-davis.org

Though I have assumed
Myriad forms in the past,
No more forms will I take on now,
The wires*, the strings* and even
The instrument* is frayed,
And I am under the sway
Of the Lord's name.
Now I will not dance
To the beat of the drum—
The drum my mind played so long,
But plays no more.
Lust, anger and the world's lure
I have reduced to ashes,
The pitcher of avarice is shattered,
The gown of cravings has become old
And I am freed from the chains of delusion.
I recognize the One within all beings,
All discussions are at an end for me.
Through the grace of God
I have found the Perfect One.

– Kabir (14th century)

**Wires*; futile desires and cravings; *strings*, misguided hopes and expectations; *instrument*; the conditioned mind—all of which are *frayed*, weakened and overcome by disciplined spiritual practice and illumination of consciousness.

Word Meanings to Know

choice To choose or select. The freedom to do so.

concentrate To draw toward a common center. To gather together in a single main body or power. Focus.

effect To make or accomplish. The way in which something acts on or influences something. The capacity or power to achieve a desired result.

God The single reality of which souls are individualized units.

guru *Gu*, heaviness, darkness; *ru*, the remover of heaviness and darkness (clouded awareness and lack of higher knowledge). A teacher. A satguru (*sat*, reality, isness, essence of being) is a "truth revealing" teacher.

kriya An action, intentional or spontaneous, that causes, makes, or allows something to happen.

radical Latin *radicalis*, having roots. Arriving from or going to a source. Favoring or resulting in extreme change. Basic.

Self-realization Conscious Self-knowledge, the result of a radical shift or change at the core of one's being. The restoration of consciousness (awareness) to the natural, transcendent state.

spiritual practice An action, procedure, or method used to remove mental and physical obstacles which prevent the unfoldment and free expression of innate soul qualities and abilities.

transform To change the nature, function, or condition.

yoga To join or unify. Attentive, knowledge-based yoga practice clarifies awareness and results in Self- and God-realization.

From the July – September 2000 Radiance

The Transformative Effects of Radical Choices and Concentrated Spiritual Practice

The kriya yoga path is primarily for sincere devotees of God who are committed to constructive, selfless living and concentrated spiritual practice that will result in Self- and God-realization and permanent liberation of consciousness. Insincere persons can, of course, benefit in accord with their aspirations and actions.

When Paramahansa Yogananda lectured and taught classes for several years in the major cities of America during the third decade of the last century, he also initiated students into kriya yoga meditation practices. It has been estimated that, during his lifetime, he initiated more than one hundred thousand people, most of whom neglected their spiritual practices after a short lapse of time.

Referring to those early years, Paramahansaji said, "I was sowing [spiritual] seeds in the soil of the subconscious minds of the people who came to hear me speak. I knew then that only a few individuals would remain faithful to their practices." He also said that some disciples who did persist on this path experienced exceptional spiritual growth.

Over the years I have initiated several thousand people. Approximately ten percent of them have remained in contact with me. Where are the others, and what are they doing? A few have died. Some are involved with various metaphysical, yoga, or "new age" studies and practices. Most of them are living ordinary self-centered lives—preoccupied with their jobs, secular interests, family members and friends, and endeavors to satisfy their material, physical, and emotional needs.

I provide accurate information about the real purpose of human life and how to awaken to Self- and God-realization, and pray for the welfare of everyone. It is the personal responsibility of sincere truth seekers to improve their understanding, make wise choices, and do whatever else is necessary to awaken to their full potential and be receptive and responsive to God's grace.

Some reasons why kriya initiates do not experience satisfying spiritual growth, waver in their resolve, or stray from the path are:

- They were insincere when initiated, or only curious.
- Lack of preparation: not understanding the philosophical basis of kriya yoga practices or not having practiced the basic meditation procedures and routines before asking to be initiated.
- Inability to comprehend the teachings.
- Insufficient commitment to practice what is learned.
- Confusion and lack of focus because of indiscriminate mixing (adulteration) of metaphysical studies, lifestyle regimens, and meditation practices with incompatible ideas and practices.
- Disinterest.
- Egotism dramatized by arrogance, a rigid, self-righteous mental attitude maintained in an attempt to justify erroneous opinions or self-centered behaviors.
- Mental and/or emotional instability.
- Being overwhelmed by or preoccupied with problems, transitory events, unnecessary obligations, or social relationships which are of little or no value.
- Emotional immaturity: unable or unwilling to be responsible for mental and emotional states, choices, actions, or circumstances.
- Choosing to remain "ordinary": to sustain emotionally satisfying relationships and fulfill the expectations of others who do not aspire to be Self-realized and liberated.

When opposite conditions prevail, innate soul qualities unfold rapidly. Resolve to be fully awake in God is constant. Attention and actions remain focused on meaningful (of real value) purposes.

The choices we make determine our experiences. The results of irrational, not clearly defined, emotion-based choices are never satisfying. Radical (knowledge-based and supported by universal, impersonal laws of causation) choices are transformative. When mental attitudes, thoughts, moods, behaviors, relationships, actions, and circumstances which enhance our lives, the lives of others, and keep us attuned to the nurturing influences of the field of Consciousness that empower evolutionary processes, are chosen, living is effortless and spiritual growth is spontaneous.

Appropriately chosen, concentrated spiritual practices quickly remove physical and mental obstacles to our innate urge to have our awareness restored to wholeness. Spiritual practices are appropriate when they are compatible with our psychological temperament and our needs. Some devotees are inclined to be devotional, others are inclined toward the intellectual discernment approach to Self- and God-knowledge, or to meditative contemplation or a life of selfless service. A balanced, integrated mode of spiritual practice is best.

- Nurture devotion to God until your awareness is so merged in God that no perception of "otherness" remains.
- Use your powers of discriminative intelligence to accurately discern the difference between your pure-conscious nature and ordinary states of awareness, to have insight into the reality of God, and to make knowledgeable choices.
- Meditate every day until your thoughts and feelings are calm and you are established in transcendent superconsciousness.
- Live effectively, yet selflessly. Be inwardly calm at all times. Be curious; continue to learn. Efficiently fulfill wholesome desires and accomplish worthwhile purposes.

These guidelines are for everyone who sincerely aspires to total well-being and liberation of consciousness.

Paramahansa Yogananda often advised disciples: "While you are swimming, you can help others learn to swim." (While you are engaged in right living and spiritual practice, to the extent that it is possible, assist others to do likewise.)

Life from the Center is a life of unhurried peace and power. It is simple. It is serene. It is amazing. It is triumphant. It is radiant. It takes no time, but it occupies all our time.

– Thomas R. Kelly / A Life of Devotion

The best preacher [guide] is the heart [soul]; the best teacher is time; the best book is the world; the best friend is God.

– The Talmud

Wisdom For The Ages

When the waves [changes] of awareness are transcended by meditation practice, consciousness is purified and oneness with the Supreme Self is realized. The phenomenal world, the truth seeker's awareness, and Supreme Consciousness are experienced as one. – *Lahiri Mahasaya*

The mind is the connecting link between the soul and the senses. Divine perceptions are acquired when the senses are spiritualized. Joy, sweetness, and exaltation fill the entire being when the sense faculties are purified and inspired by the purity of the soul. The body is the holy temple. God as the indwelling soul is the deity. One who is enlightened knows this truth. – *Lahiri Mahasaya*

Only a few [individuals] can rise above the influences of their professed creeds and find absolute unanimity in the truths propounded by all great faiths. People who are wholly engrossed in mundane concerns are in need of help and guidance. All creatures ... are eager to realize [eternal] existence, consciousness, and bliss. – *Sri Yukteswar*

When rested by [kriya] pranayama practice, the nervous system is refreshed. If one daily rests the nervous system in this way, the physical body is vitalized. Life and death come under the control of the yogi who perseveres in the practice of [kriya] pranayama. – *Sri Yukteswar*

God's will [evolutionary inclinations] will be accomplished whether you choose to participate with it or not—but when you do participate with it, your spiritual growth is quickened. – *Paramahansa Yogananda*

Paramahansa Yogananda 1893 – 1952
Early 1940s

Commentary

Self-Knowledge and Soul Liberation

The following article is a prose paraphrase of a portion of *Yoga-Vashishta Ramayana*, a Sanskrit poetic work (circa tenth century) of approximately thirty thousand verses. Attributed to Valmiki, the composer of the epic Ramayana, it is presented as a dialogue between Prince Rama and his teacher Vashishta. Here, only the words of the teacher are used.

Vashishta:

There are two categories of liberation [when soul awareness is devoid of illusions and is no longer adversely influenced by mental processes]. One: when mental conditionings remain influential. Two: when mental conditionings are no longer influential. The former exists when the enlightened soul is still embodied; the latter prevails after the enlightened soul departs the body. The uncontrolled influences of the mind are troublesome; the pacification of mental impulses results in bliss. The heavily conditioned mind is the cause of repeated changes and unhappiness. The soul that is not established in Self-knowledge is inclined to identify with the conditionings of the mind.

Commentary:

The innate state of a soul is pure consciousness; it is only when the soul is identified with mental states and other objective phenomena that confusion results.

Vashishta:

As long as unregulated mental processes dominate awareness, suffering does not cease. When the fluctuations and changes that occur in the restless mind cease, perceptions of "otherness" cease.

When feelings of unhappiness and [ordinary] happiness do not distract a person from his or her completely calm state, then know that subliminal [below the threshold of conscious awareness] mental conditionings have ceased to be influential. When thought-waves cease, the ideas of "I am this" or "I am not this"

do not arise and limit awareness. In one who is liberated while embodied, thoughts of misfortune, poverty or pride—or feelings of dullness and excitement—do not arise.

Commentary:

Suffering due to various extreme causes may be intense, or it may be mild (when expectations are not fulfilled or events occur which elicit feelings of impatience or frustration). Even in the midst of pleasurable circumstances the possibility of suffering exists. If happiness is solely dependent upon external circumstances, unhappiness may result when they are changed or removed.

Read Patanjali's *Yoga-Sutras* 1:2–4 for a description of what occurs when restless mental waves (*vrittis*) are restrained and returned to a dormant state, and when they are influential.

Vashishta:

When subliminal tendencies [*vasanas*] cease to be influential, innate [soul] qualities emerge. The manifestation of natural goodness in a liberated person's consciousness is known as *sattva* [purity]. This indicates that one is liberated while embodied.

The dissolution of the mind after the enlightened soul departs from the body cannot be accurately described. The state of the soul is then that of supreme quiescence [rest, stillness] and equilibrium. Souls which have transcended the mind and intelligence have realized the supreme state of peace.

Commentary:

Mental transformations (vrittis) cease when the driving forces of subliminal tendencies (vasanas) are dormant. Then, when one is conscious, innate soul qualities spontaneously emerge.

The mind is needed to process information while the soul is still identified with a physical, astral, or causal body. When awareness is removed from physical, astral, and causal involvements, only Self-realization remains. This realization also occurs during deep, transcendent, superconscious meditation.

Vashishta:

There are two supports of the mind with innumerable ideas; the movement of prana [life force] and the enlightened soul's obstinate, illusional opinion [due to identification with mental processes] that it is other than a pure-conscious being. When prana moves through the subtle channels in the body, there are fluctuations in awareness and the mind. When prana ceases to move, awareness is no longer fragmented and mental waves cease.

Commentary:

Our minds are units of a universal mind. When life forces are restless, thoughts are empowered. The mistaken idea that one is a mind rather than a soul keeps awareness confined to the mind and its processes. When, during meditation life forces are made calm and orderly by attentive (kriya yoga) pranayama practice, awareness is clarified.

Vashishta:

When soul awareness is self-abiding, a pure state of awareness is naturally experienced. Therefore, you can realize the natural, pure state by either pacifying the movements of prana or by not disturbing the uniformity of your innate awareness of being. When the natural, pure state is disturbed, thoughts and feelings are stimulated and dormant subliminal tendencies are activated.

To calm the mind, the practitioner of yoga practices pranayama, meditation, and other appropriate methods. Enlightened yogis regard pranayama practice as the most appropriate method for quieting the mind.

Commentary:

Other "appropriate methods" may include wholesome lifestyle regimens, a natural food diet, and actualization of the yamas and niyamas (the first two stages of raja yoga practice described in chapter two of Patanjali's *Yoga-Sutras*).

Vashishta:

When obstinately clinging to illusions [misperceptions], and therefore abandoning a thorough enquiry into the nature of truth,

one experiences various kinds of limitations. Caught up in his or her own illusions, whatever is seen or thought to be real [when it is not] produces more delusions [erroneous concepts]. Then, because of the intensity of mental conditionings and illusions, one becomes unaware of the essence of being and misperceives what is observed or experienced.

When the psychological condition is not dense, and has become transparent, the liberated soul lives by the momentum of past influences [even as a potter's wheel continues to turn after the initial impulse has been withdrawn]. The seeds of karma [mental conditionings] will not have any causative influence in the future. Upon departing from the body, the awareness of such a one is merged into the Infinite.

Commenary:

The thoughts and actions of a fully enlightened person do not create new problem-causing subconscious conditionings (karmic impressions). Only the causative force of subconscious impressions (*samskaras*) of past actions, thoughts, desires, and experiences may be somewhat influential. When these are neutralized, wise choices and spontaneous, appropriate actions are the determining factors.

Vashishta:

If one of the two root-causes of spiritual ignorance [movements of prana and clinging to illusions], is gotten rid of, the other is also removed, for they are interdependent. Illusions are produced by the mind and mental fluctuations are produced by the movements of prana. One goads the other into action. Motion is natural to prana. When prana influences awareness, mental waves are produced and their movements keep prana in motion.

There is nothing that purifies the mind that is equal to God-knowledge. The devotee who is perfected in yoga [samadhi], in the course of time discovers that knowledge in the Self. One who has faith [soon] acquires God-knowledge. Devoted to [realizing] that, controlling the senses, and having wisdom, the devotee quickly attains the tranquil state. –*Bhagavad Gita 4:38, 39*

Dialogue

Kriya Yoga Philosophy, Traditions, and Practices

Send questions or inquiries for possible use in a future issue by mail or e-mail ron@csa-davis.org

Some kriya yoga teachers recommend that the throat be lubricated with oil before practicing kriya pranayama. Is this necessary?

Lubricating the throat is only recommended if dryness occurs. If it is necessary (for most people it is not), put approximately a quarter of a teaspoon of olive oil or ghee at the back of the tongue and swallow gently until the throat feels coated with the lubricant. Then practice kriya pranayama.

Should one pause to breathe normally between kriya pranayamas, or should pranayama breathing be continuous?

Experiment until you can practice comfortably without having to interrupt the sequence of pranayamas. In time, you will discover the breathing rhythm (neither too fast nor too slow) that is satisfying. There will be a natural, momentary pause at the end of inhalation and exhalation. Concentrate on the flow of current upwards and downwards through the spinal pathway. The breathing rhythm will then easily be regulated. After completing pranayama practice, be sure to sit for a while (several minutes or for however long you may be inclined) in the calm state.

Through the years, you have written several commentaries on Patanjali's Yoga-Sutras. How has your understanding improved as you have done this?

I first wrote a commentary on the *Yoga-Sutras* in 1964 because I wanted the experience of doing it. Later, I included the *Yoga-Sutras* in a few other books (as I have done in *A Guide to Kriya Yoga Practice*) because I think it is important that truth seekers have access to the information. Through the years, my understanding of the meanings of the sutras has improved. Regular reading of basic texts on yoga philosophy and practice is highly

recommended. As we become more insightful, we are able perceive what we could not see before. The *Yoga-Sutras* and the *Bhagavad Gita* are the two basic texts all kriya yoga practitioners should read. For my commentary on the Gita read *The Eternal Way.*

Why did Patanjali elaborate so extensively on unrestricted soul abilities (in the third chapter of the Yoga-Sutras)?

Patanjali recorded the teachings of yogis who had discovered the way to Self- and God-realization. He may have described the various *siddhis* (exceptional powers of perception and abilities) for the purpose of letting future practitioners of yoga know what they might—or what is possible to—experience. He did mention that siddhis should primarily be used to elicit samadhi states and to accomplish liberation of consciousness. The ability to discern the karmic condition (3:23) can be used to know the existence and characteristics of troublesome subconscious conditionings and to eliminate them. Contemplation on friendliness, compassion, and other noble qualities (3:24) can result in actualization of mental, moral, and spiritual strength. By contemplation on the light (reality and characteristics) of consciousness (3:26) knowledge can be acquired. By contemplation on the chakras and nervous system (3:30) knowledge of flows of life force and other internal conditions can be acquired. Contemplation on the spiritual eye and crown chakra (3:33) enables the meditator to have direct perception of higher realities. Contemplation on the true nature of the Self as being distinct from mind and intellect (3:36) can result in Self-realization.

What is the best way to practice Self-inquiry?

Examine your innermost perception of what you are. When the mind is calm and you are observant, you know that you are other than your mind and body. There is no need to try to discover your Self. Remove your attention from all that you are not. What you are will then remain. At first, the practice of Self-inquiry may involve thinking. When thoughts become dormant, your true nature will be realized (accurately apprehended and experienced).

2019 Retreat Schedules & Application Information

Guest house location and room number will be on the bulletin board in the lower parking lot.

Private Retreats described on page 28 of Truth Journal:

July 1 – 5 and 8 – 12
August 5 – 9 and 12 – 16 September 2 – 6 and 9 – 13

October to December Weekends, arrive Friday:

October 19, 20. Three meals on Saturday. Sunday breakfast. Saturday: 7 a.m. meditation. 10 a.m. class. 12:30 p.m. class. 6 p.m. meditation & video. Sunday: 10 a.m. meditation.

November 16, 17. Program like October (above).

December 7*:*
Saturday 10 a.m. Three hour meditation. Lunch 1:15 p.m.

Retreat dates _____

Arrival date _____ Departure _____

Email _____ Tel _____

Name [s] _____

_____

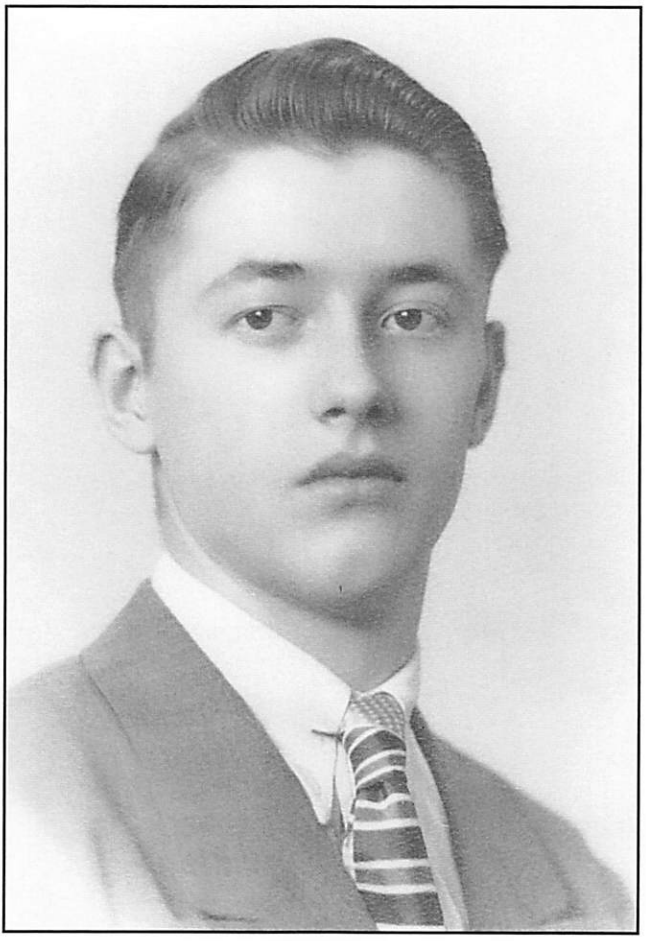
Address _____

_____

Center for Spiritual Awareness
Post Office Box 7 Lakemont, Georgia 30552-0001
Tel 706-782-4723 weekdays 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.
info@csa-davis.org www.csa-davis.org

Radiance

Published Quarterly for Kriya Yoga Initiates
Distributed Internationally Autumn 2019



Roy Eugene Davis, *Autumn 1948*

copyright 2019 © Center for Spiritual Awareness
Kathleen Low, Editor
Written by Roy Eugene Davis for initiates in the Kriya Yoga tradition represented by Mahavatar Babaji, Lahiri Mahasaya, Sri Yukteswar, Paramahansa Yogananda, and their successors.
Published quarterly. Subscription in the U.S. 1 year, $8.00.
Foreign $10.00, airmailed.
Center for Spiritual Awareness P. O. Box 7 Lakemont, Georgia 30552
Offices and Retreat Center on CSA Lane off Lake Rabun Road.
Tel: 706-782-4723 weekdays 8 a.m. – 3 p.m. Fax: 706-782-4560
For retreat reservations and book orders: info@csa-davis.org
Web site: www.csa-davis.org

How to Relate to and Overcome the Influences of the Three Constituent Attributes of Nature

guna A constituent [part of a whole] attribute of nature.

The three gunas—sattwa (sometimes sattva, pronounced with a "w" sound), rajas, and tamas—are the influential attributes of nature which regulate the cosmic forces of the power of Consciousness. Sattwa (*sat*, truth of being) is purifying, elevating, and illuminating. Rajas, manifested by the tension between sattwa and tamas (heaviness, inertia) causes actions and transformation.

Originated by the positive (sattwa) and negative (tamas) poles within u;timate Reality and the interactions (rajas) between them, these three attribute-influences prevail at all levels of cosmic manifestation. In the field of primordial nature they make possible Om's self-referring processes which produce space, time, and individualized cosmic forces. Projected from the field of primordial nature, their interactions produce the five subtle instruments of sense perception, five subtle instruments of action, and five element-influences that manifest gross matter.

Combinations of the five subtle element-influences (of ether or space with cosmic forces, air, fire, water, earth) produce the governing influences—vata dosha (circulating); pitta dosha (heating and transformative); kapha dosha (moistening and lubricating)—which determine the basic mind-body constitution of living things and regulate their internal processes. Because they can also influence mental, emotional, and physical states and states of awareness, it is beneficial for Kriya Yoga practitioners to understand and wisely relate to them until their influences are balanced and supportive, neutralized, or transcended.

Chapter fourteen in the Bhagavad Gita provides insight into the gunas and the effects of their influences:

> Sattwa, rajas, tamas—the three qualities born of nature—bind the imperishable dweller (true Self) in the body.
>
> Of these, sattwa is pure, illuminating, and health-giving. It confines [restricts] soul awareness by inclining it to be

attached to happiness and knowledge.

Rajas is of the nature of passion arising from craving and attachment. It confines by inclining the [embodied] soul to be attached to actions.

Tamas is born of ignorance which confuses all embodied beings. It confines by inclining the soul to be negligent, indolent [lazy, inactive], and unconscious.

When the influence of sattwa is dominant, it prevails over rajas and tamas; when the influence of rajas is dominant, it prevails over sattwa and tamas; when the influence of tamas is dominant, it prevails over sattwa and rajas.

When the light of knowledge shines through all gates of the body, sattwa is dominant.

When the influence of rajas is dominant, [then] greed, ego-driven endeavors, restlessness, and [insatiable] desires become pronounced.

When the embodied soul makes its transition under the influence of sattwa, it attains the pure realms of those who know the highest [truth].

One who departs the body with rajas dominant is reborn among those who are attached to actions. If departing when tamas is dominant, dullness prevails and one is [may be] born among people who are deluded.

The fruit [result] of good action is sattwic; the fruit of rajasic action is pain; that of tamasic action is ignorance.

From sattwa, knowledge is born; from rajas, desire is born; from tamas, negligence and delusion result.

Those who are established in sattwa go upward [experience spiritual growth]; the rajasic stay in the middle [make little or no progress]; established in tamas, one goes downward [falls back into delusion].

The seer who perceives no other [influential] agent than that of the gunas, and knows that [supreme Consciousness] which is higher than them, attains pure consciousness.

When the embodied Self transcends these three qualities of nature which originated the body, it is released from birth, death, old age, and pain, and realizes immortality.

– Bhagavad Gita, chapter 14 (The Yoga of the Discernment of the Qualities of Nature): 5–20

Note that the influences of the gunas can be both helpful and restrictive. Although sattwic influences can expand and clarify awareness, they can also cause us to be inclined to be overly fascinated by the spiritual happiness we experience and knowledge of cosmic processes that is acquired.

Rajasic influences make possible all beneficial transformative actions, those which occur spontaneously and cause psychological transformation and spiritual growth and those which we perform with conscious intention. They may also incline us to be restless and want to be excessively action-oriented with or without a clear sense of meaningful purpose.

Tamasic influences can have a stabilizing effect; they can also incline us to be complacent, contribute to mental dullness, and blur our awareness. Tamas guna is said to be "born of ignorance" because it is produced or manifested by inertia (influenced by the enlivening power of sattwa guna). Individuals who are partially conscious and knowledgeable while still impelled by tendencies rooted in the subconscious and unconscious realms of the mind, are confused and tend to wander aimlessly through life.

Meditators whose awareness is sattwic are attracted to the joy of discovery of higher realities. If awareness is rajasic, one may be attracted to or fascinated by subjective perceptions and "mystical" experiences. If awareness is tamasic, one may tend to become semiconscious or go to sleep and dream when meditating.

When we are Self-realized we can have the support of nature's influences without being restricted by them. When we are liberated, the gunas are no longer influential (Yoga-Sutras 4:30–32).

By improving our powers of discriminative intelligence and intuition, cultivating soul peace in all circumstances, and adopting constructive mental attitudes and behaviors, rajasic and tamasic influences can be weakened and neutralized and sattwic qualities increased. The fundamental behavioral guideline for kriya yogis is to choose thoughts, feelings, personal behaviors, circumstances, relationships, and actions that are entirely sattwic: wholesome and elevating. Until we are able to do this of our own volition, it

can be helpful to emulate the behaviors of enlightened souls. The following excerpt is from *Yoga Vashishta Ramayana*:

> Established in truth-realization, the great sages lived constantly in a condition of peace and equanimity. Free from psychological predisposition, they did not seek or reject either life or death. They remained firm in direct experience [of truth] and were engaged in diverse activities in accordance with scriptural rules which they knew to be appropriate conduct. They retained their equanimity even in situations where others would have lost their peace and balanced state of mind. Their mind had fully entered into the state of sattva [divine nature] and was therefore utterly free from delusion, from egotism, and from the desire for achievement, though they did not reject such achievement or the rewards for their actions. They were engaged in natural activities, allowing all actions to proceed from them without ego-motivated volition. Emulate their actions. Let your personality be egoless and let appropriate actions spontaneously proceed from you. Infinite Consciousness alone is the truth; it is that which has put on [assumed] this appearance of diversity.

While we cannot actually be egoless while observing and relating to objective circumstances, the ego (illusional sense of selfhood) can be purified and known for what it is.

Note: Yoga-Vashishta Ramayana, attributed to Valmiki, the composer of the Ramayana, is presented as a dialogue between Prince Rama and his teacher Vashishta.

Marble statue of Lahiri Mahasaya, *India*

Kriya Yoga Philosophy, Traditions, and Practices

Send questions or inquiries for possible use in a future issue by mail or e-mail ron@csa-davis.org

What is the origin of the sound that is inwardly heard when meditating on Om?

At first, the sounds in the inner ears may be similar to the sound that is heard when putting an empty bottle or sea shell to one's ear. Then the sound produced by the nervous system may be heard. Whatever is heard can be used as a mantra, to attract your attention and keep it focused. Imagine the sound to be an aspect of the Om vibration. The Sanskrit word used to describe the sound of Om is *pranava*, "humming"—a continuous (without beginning or ending), flowing vibration that emerges in the meditator's awareness. By listening to this sound, attention becomes so absorbed in it that awareness is removed from involvement with thoughts and moods. Eventually, awareness of the sound ceases. The meditator then experiences a state of conscious, clear awareness which does not require the support of thoughts, moods, or an object of concentration. This state of clarified awareness provides complete rest for the nervous system, mental peacefulness, and the opportunity to experience spontaneous perceptions of the essence of one's being. You can listen to Om any time when meditating, especially after kriya pranayama and jyoti mudra practice.

In Patanjali's Yoga-Sutras (1:27,28), concentrated meditation on Om is described as one of several ways to elicit samadhi: "The evidential [verifying] aspect of God is Om. Meditation on Om culminates in knowledge of its meaning and in Self- and God-realization." Also (1:35): "Perception of subtle cosmic forces and their actions and manifestations causes changes in the meditator's awareness which contribute to mental stability."

Samadhi (a unified state of awareness) is not produced by our actions. Our actions (kriyas) such as cultivation of peacefulness,

dispassion, devotion to God, selfless prayer, practice of meditation techniques, and letting go of the illusional sense of selfhood allow our awareness to be clarified. Kriyas (right actions) are practiced to resist, weaken, and remove all mental and physical obstacles to Self- and God-realization (Yoga-Sutras 2:2).

Samadhi is our natural awareness. When we are not established in samadhi, our awareness is identified with mental conditionings and has to be restored to its natural state. Attentive Kriya Yoga practices restore our awareness to wholeness.

For as long as we continue to think that we are self-conscious (egocentric) beings in need of attaining Self-realization or finding or connecting with God (which is normal when we first start on the spiritual path), we are inclined to think and behave in accord with that mistaken idea.

The following excerpt from a published commentary on Lahiri Mahasaya's words regarding the inner meaning of the Bhagavad Gita, written by his disciple Bhupendranath Sanyal, explains what occurs when one listens to the Om vibration:

> When your intelligence, which was confused by conflicting [philosophical] opinions, is stable in realization of oneness [samadhi], then shall you awaken to insightful knowledge.
> —*Bhagavad Gita 2:53*
>
> *Lahiri Mahasaya's interpretation:*
> *By always being [established] in the sound waves of Om, yoga or unity is realized. Thus, always listen to the sound of Om.*
>
> *Bhupendranath Sanyal's commentary:*
> Repeated [kriya] pranayamas steady the life force within you. After doing your meditation for some time with great concentration, you will hear a vibration like [that] of a fine substance. By pranayama practice that calms the life force, a sound emerges which [may be] followed by the sound of a bell ringing at a distance. In the beginning, it will create a fluctuation in the mind. By steadying the Self in it, the sound changes to the sound of Om, which is

> self-existing and gives the devotee a still state of mind and heart [feeling nature]. The great saint Kabir wrote: "Your whole body says God and the pores of your body sound with Om." This sweet spiritual sound fills the body and mind with peaceful stillness. Awareness gets lost in this sound and from it emerges true knowledge of the Supreme Self. This is yoga, unification or realization of the Self.

Lahiri Mahasaya emphasized that Kriya Yoga devotees should meditate for the purpose of Self- and God-realization rather than be concerned about lesser results.

I feel physically, mentally, and emotionally better in some geographical locations than I do in others. What are some of the [possible] effects of geography, altitude, materials used in buildings that one lives in, and any other environmental conditions that may influence one's ability to be healthy and to experience spiritual growth?

It is best to live where you feel most comfortable. Some people feel more "at home" in a warm, sunny climate near a lake or an ocean. Others prefer the mountains, a desert area, or a region of the country where seasonal changes are more obvious. Wherever one chooses to live, it is best to be close to nature rather than dwell in a city or a community where there is much traffic, noise, and restless activity.

A clean, harmonious environment is ideal. Buildings and furnishings made of natural materials are healthier. Synthetic materials, often used in wall and ceiling insulation products, floor coverings, kitchen and bathroom wall coverings and counters, and furniture exude harmful chemicals, as do various kinds of plastics. Air ducts should be regularly cleaned. Copper water pipes are more desirable than plastic: slime, toxic matter and bacteria can more easily accumulate in the latter. When drawing water from a faucet in the morning, let the water run for at least thirty seconds to loosen and flush any debris. Plastic containers should not be used to store food or water, nor should foods or liquids packaged in plastic containers be purchased. Bathroom walls, counters, and

cabinets should be regularly cleaned to avoid an accumulation of residues of vapors from toilet flushings. Sustained closeness to magnetic fields produced by electric currents should be avoided. It is best not to sit close to a television set or have an electric clock or radio near the head of the bed. Electric blankets should not be used. Speculation regarding the possibility of harmful effects on the brain caused by weak microwave radiations from cell telephones has been recently published. Some researchers recommend that an ear receiver be used, with the cell phone at least three feet from the head. Electric power lines should not be near homes or public buildings.

Many people believe that the placement and layout of a dwelling place may either be supportive or debilitating. The *sthapatya* (or *vastu*, "land or site") *veda* (knowledge) system, believed by some people to be a precursor to *feng shui* (a Chinese system) recommends guidelines for orientation, placement, and proportion of structures. According to the vastu veda system, the building should be rectangular, with the entrance on the east and aligned with the center of the building; another door or window should be on the opposite side of the house to allow solar energy to flow through easily. The center of the house should have an open space. Hallways and entrances to rooms should be placed so that one can move gracefully from one part of the abode to another. High ceilings are best, at least in the main living area. A "sacred space," a room or a designated area of a room, for meditation and quiet reflection should be maintained.

I've noticed that many people practice healing by laying their hands on others and [seem to] use various siddhi abilities to earn money. I notice, at times, my hands become very hot and I wonder how [or if] this condition can be used to further my spiritual growth.

Attempting to heal by putting the hands on (or near) a person has become more widely practiced in recent years. Life force *can* flow from one person to another in this manner; whether or not it is of value as it is practiced by many individuals is debatable. Often, the reported benefits are due to the sense of comfort and well-being the patient-client feels because of having been given

attention. The placebo (Latin "I shall please") effect is well-known: if one believes that a regimen of therapy or a medication is beneficial, belief can strengthen the immune system, result in other positive physiological responses, and cause one to feel more confident and peaceful.

If one has exceptional abilities (siddhis), there is no harm in using them wisely to help oneself or others. If a professional service is rendered, reasonable payment for the practitioner's attention and time is appropriate. One should not, of course, "be in the business of helping others" for the sake of making money.

Most people who seek the assistance of energy-channelers would be better off if they learned to help themselves to wellness by attitude adjustment, behavior modification, and the implementation of other wholesome lifestyle regimens. Medical doctors, for instance, know that perhaps 60 (or more) percent of patients who seek their help would improve if they ignored their symptoms, obtained rest, and continued their ordinary activities. (I am not suggesting that professional help not be gotten when needed.)

Through the years, I have met many individuals—who were not mentally alert, emotionally balanced, or spiritually aware—who told me they attended a course of instruction for the purpose of learning to channel energy to others. Even if they could be a conduit for a flow of life force, and had good intentions, I would not want to be on the receiving end of their treatment.

I do not know the cause of excessive heat manifesting in your hands. To cool them, you might want to experiment: put your hands in a pan of cool water; hold your hands over your head by extending your arms upward for a minute or two; or visualize (and feel) your hands becoming cooler. Since it is possible to direct a flow of blood to the hands (or any part of the body) by gentle use of imagination and will, it should be possible to slightly reduce the flow of blood to your hands in the same manner. If energy is the cause of heating, it can be reduced by withdrawing it from the afflicted area or balancing its flow.

If excessive heating of the body occurs because of increased flows of life force as a result of concentrated meditation practice, wearing a pearl, or a yellow sapphire, may be helpful. If this is

done, it should be next to (or very near) the skin, either set in a ring worn on a finger or in a pendant on a chain necklace. Yellow sapphire (at least two carets) is expensive. Yellow citrine (quartz) of three or more carets or any yellow, clear gemstone can be used as a substitute. The color, rather than the chemical composition of the mineral, is said to have the beneficial influence (gem dealers who are primarily interested in earning money may be inclined to disagree).

I am almost desperate in my desire to be Self-realized. Is there anything I can do to more quickly be Self-realized, or is there anyone to whom I can go who can help?

Ardent yearning to be enlightened can keep you steadfast on the spiritual path. Desire that causes mental and emotional unrest is in conflict with your aspiration. By "complete" practice of Kriya Yoga: right, disciplined living; patient, attentive inquiry into the reality of your true nature and of God; and regular superconscious meditation practice, your soul qualities and powers of perception will spontaneously unfold as mental, emotional, and physical restrictions are weakened and removed. During my first year with Paramahansa Yogananda, he said to me, "Roy, you should want [to know] God with such devotional ardor that you feel you cannot wait for another day to pass before having that realization, but you must have the patience to wait if it doesn't occur that day."

Until you are Self-realized, to the best of your ability live as though you were Self-realized. Don't wait to be Self-realized to have peace of mind and other supportive circumstances. Use the skills you now have to live an ideal life.

I am inclined to frequently consider some of my ideas, meditative perceptions, and events that occur in my life to be very significant. When I am calm and objective, I have a more rational view of them. How can I always be rational and discerning?

Train yourself to be calm and objective at all times regardless of what is experienced or observed. This can more easily be done by learning to always be Self-centered (aware of your true

nature in relationship to the wholeness of life). Your intellectual and intuitive powers will then be more refined and accurate.

How can one have no likes or dislikes (preferences or aversions) without becoming passive or inactive?

It is normal to have preferences and to make choices that will result in satisfaction of wholesome desires. What is recommended is that obsessive mental and emotional attachments be avoided. Aversion is a strong feeling of distaste or dislike. Disagreeable or unwanted thoughts, feelings, or circumstances can be ignored rather than allowing feelings of repulsion to persist. When we are able to make wise choices which are not influenced by obsessive thinking or undisciplined emotions, we can live enthusiastically and freely with conscious awareness of meaningful purpose.

Can the benefits of being in proximity to a guru be explained in scientific terms?

A dictionary defines *science* as the observation, identification, description, experimental investigation, and theoretical explanation of natural phenomena. A *guru* is a teacher. By association with a qualified teacher, we are provided with opportunities to learn—by listening, observing, and assuming their viewpoints and states of awareness. In the presence of a spiritually enlightened teacher we may also experience clarification of awareness and receive a transmission of their vital force which can arouse our dormant soul forces. The best way to benefit from association (or mental and spiritual attunement) with a guru is to listen, observe, practice what is learned, and patiently wait for understanding to unfold and spiritual growth to occur.

Explain how "Kriya Yoga practice quickens spiritual evolution."

Right actions (kriyas) contribute to total well-being, enable us to live effectively, and remove all mental and physical obstacles that confine our awareness. When our awareness is no longer confined, we realize (experience and know) our oneness with the wholeness of life. Conscious awareness of unification is yoga,

in contrast to ordinary, fragmented and thus confused states of awareness. Although we are, at the innermost core of being, flawless units of one Consciousness, if we are not aware of this fact we need to learn to be aware of what we are. By right thinking, right living, and meditation practiced to the stage of superconsciousness, debilitating subconscious conditionings are weakened and neutralized, our awareness is clarified, and our innate impulse to have awareness restored to wholeness can more easily be actualized. Spiritual growth then more rapidly occurs.

Restless thoughts persist because of restless movements of prana. When the devotee is no longer aware of meditating and is firm in Self-knowledge which is nondual and blissful, a state of oneness is experienced. – *Lahiri Mahasaya*

Focus your attention within [when meditating]. You will experience new power, new strength, and new peace of body, mind, and spirit. All bonds that limit you will be vanquished.
– *Paramahansa Yogananda to Roy Eugene Davis 1950*

2020 Retreat Schedules & Application Information

Guest house location and room number will be on the bulletin board in the lower parking lot.

2020 Private Retreats described on page 28 of Truth Journal:

April 6 – 10 and 13 – 17 May 4 – 8 and 11 – 15
June 1 – 5 and 8 – 12 July 6 – 10 and 13 – 17
August 3 – 7 and 10 – 14 September 7 – 11

***2019** October to December Weekends*
Arrive Friday by 7 p.m:

October 19, 20: Three meals on Saturday. Sunday breakfast.
Saturday: 7 a.m. meditation. 10 a.m. class. 12:30 p.m. class.
6 p.m. meditation & video.
Sunday: 8 a.m. breakfast. 10 a.m. meditation.

November 16, 17. Program like October (above).

December 7:
Saturday 10 a.m. Three hour meditation. Lunch 1:15 p.m.

Retreat dates _____

Arrival date _____ Departure _____

Email _____ Tel _____

Name [s] _____

_____

Address _____

_____

Center for Spiritual Awareness
Post Office Box 7 Lakemont, Georgia 30552-0001
Tel 706-782-4723 weekdays 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.
info@csa-davis.org www.csa-davis.org

Radiance

Published Quarterly for Kriya Yoga Initiates
Distributed Internationally Winter 2019-2020

Paramahansa Yogananda with students
demonstrating Yoga poses.
Late 1940s

copyright 2019 © Center for Spiritual Awareness
Kathleen Low, Editor
Written by Roy Eugene Davis (1931–2019) for initiates in the Kriya Yoga tradition represented by Mahavatar Babaji, Lahiri Mahasaya, Sri Yukteswar, Paramahansa Yogananda, and their successors.
Published quarterly. Subscription in the U.S. 1 year, $8.00.
Foreign $10.00, airmailed.
Center for Spiritual Awareness P. O. Box 7 Lakemont, Georgia 30552
Offices and Retreat Center on CSA Lane off Lake Rabun Road.
Tel: 706-782-4723 weekdays 8 a.m. – 3 p.m. Fax: 706-782-4560
For retreat reservations and book orders: info@csa-davis.org
Web site: www.csa-davis.org

Hatha Yoga Pradipika
(Light on Hatha Yoga)

The *Hatha Yoga Pradipika* (composed by Yogi Swatmarama, circa 14th century) is the most widely used text on the subject. In it, various physical disciplines are integrated with the higher spiritual aspirations and practices of Raja Yoga, also known as eight-limbed yoga as described in chapter two (titled Kriya Yoga) of Patanjali's Yoga-Sutras (2nd century). The word *pradipika*, translated as "light" in the title used for Swatmarama's text, can also be translated as "self-illuminating," or "that which illumines."

The aim of the dedicated Hatha Yoga practitioner is to first cleanse the body, make it immune to disease, and rid it of the limitations that are common to the ordinary person's experience. Hatha Yoga practice "removes dullness (tamasic influences) and impurities" and balances the mind-body constitution.

The ultimate purpose of "complete" Hatha Yoga practice is to enable the practitioner to utilize the exceptional abilities and powers of concentration that are acquired to effectively practice meditative contemplation and awaken to full liberation of consciousness. The author of *Hatha Yoga Pradipika* forthrightly asserts: "There are those who only perform Hatha Yoga without knowledge of Raja Yoga; them I consider to be deprived of the fruit [results] of their endeavors." Also: "If prana [life force] does not flow in the middle passage [sushumna nadi in the spine], if the bindu [source-essence of life force] is not steadied by regulated prana, if the mind does not reflect [the results of] spontaneous meditation, those who speak of spiritual knowledge are only indulging in boastful and false assertions."

Chapter One

1. Salutations to the glorious original guru who taught the knowledge of Hatha Yoga which shines forth as a stairway for those who aspire to ascend [progressively accomplish] the highest stage of yoga: Raja Yoga.

The "original" guru (teacher) is supreme Consciousness with knowledge of itself and all life-processes within it. As the innate

knowledge of spiritually inclined souls emerged from within their pure-conscious nature, knowledge of practices which make possible unification (yoga) of individualized awareness also emerged. Supreme Consciousness is thus the real teacher.

Hatha is sometimes defined as "forceful," an indication that the practitioner is to resist, restrain, and overcome the instinctual (and conditioned) drives, tendencies, and habits which confine ordinary (egocentric) people to a life of bondage and limitation.

2. After reverently acknowledging the guru, Yogi Swatmarama presents the knowledge of Hatha Yoga only [as preparation] for [the practice of] Raja Yoga, the highest way.

As all devotees are advised to do before embarking on a course of action, the author of this treatise reverently acknowledges the true guru, supreme Consciousness. In this verse, it is clearly stated that it should be understood that knowledge (and practice) of Hatha Yoga prepares one for Raja Yoga practice. Raja Yoga practice includes observance of ethical and moral guidelines; disciplined practices; meditation posture; pranayama (harmonizing flows of prana); detaching attention from externals and directing it inward; concentration; meditation; and samadhi. Samadhi is either the "bringing together" of the meditator's awareness with the object of meditative contemplation, or the transcendence of both objective and subjective phenomena.

3. The highest state [that is possible to realize by practice] of Raja Yoga is [generally] unknown due to misconceptions which are the results of various [invalid] ideas and concepts. In good will and as a blessing, Swatmarama offers the light of Hatha Yoga.

The "highest state" is flawless Self- and God-realization which culminates in liberation of consciousness. The reality of this state is not comprehended by people whose minds are clouded with illusions (misperceptions of facts) and a variety of erroneous ideas. Just as darkness prevails when light is absent, so ignorance prevails when knowledge is not apprehended.

4. Yogi Matsyendranath had knowledge of Hatha Yoga. He gave it to Gorakhnath and others, and by their grace the author learned it.

Matsyendranath (circa 10th century) is considered to have been one of eighty-four "great adepts" in the Hatha Yoga tradition. Among his several disciples, Gorakhnath is especially respected.

5.–8.[These verses acknowledge supreme Consciousness and the names of thirty-one accomplished teachers who transmitted this knowledge prior to the writing of this treatise.]

9. These mahasiddhas [great accomplished spiritual masters], having overcome [transcended] time [death] by the practice of Hatha Yoga, roam about in the universe.

It is said that some enlightened saints continue to abide in physical, astral, or causal realms for thousands of [earth] years before transcending their illusional sense of selfhood. They may 1) be engaged in spiritual practices to further purify their awareness; 2) be inwardly liberated yet still somewhat confined by the influences of the gunas; 3) serve as teachers; 4) choose (or agree) to remain in contact with the manifest realms to infuse it with spiritual radiance (as does Mahavatar Babaji).

10. For those who are continually tempered by the heat [tapa, burning] of spiritual, physical, and environmental pain, Hatha Yoga is like a hermitage [secluded retreat] that provides protection. For those who are always established in yoga, this practice is a foundation.

The anguish of yearning to be spiritually aware when it seems that progress is slow or nonexistent can be more painful than any physical or environmental hardship. Attentive yoga practice provides insights into the causes of discomfort and how to eliminate them, contributes to total well-being, and enables one to easily experience a continuous flow of harmonious events and circumstances. Whether one is new on the spiritual path or has advanced to the stage where superconscious states are being experienced and refined, yogic practices can be supportive.

11. Hatha Yoga [practice] is the greatest secret of yogis who want to accomplish perfection. Indeed, to be fruitful, it must be kept secret; if revealed, it becomes powerless.

Yoga (the processes and the culmination of right practice) can only be known by personal participation that provides insightful experience. Overt displays of piety or useless conversations with others about one's spiritual aspirations or practices are to be avoided. It is all right to inform individuals about yoga and its practices if they are sincerely interested in self-improvement and spiritual growth. Too much talking and socialization dissipates vital forces and makes trivial (common) that which should be considered to be of profound significance.

12.–13.[These verses describe the ideal environment for yoga practice: it should be secluded and supportive.]

Any clear, quiet place with provisions for one's needs is suitable for spiritual practice.

14.Here, being devoid of excess thinking [about secular and other matters], yoga should be practiced as instructed by the guru.

After the philosophical principles and practices of yoga are learned, one should be dedicated to right practice of regimens and procedures. Thinking about matters which are not relevant should be avoided. Personal instruction obtained directly from a knowledgeable teacher is best. If this is not possible, helpful information can be obtained from available writings of a knowledgeable person.

15.Overeating, excessive exertion, talkativeness, [rigid] adherence to [fixed] lifestyle rules or routines, [excessive] socializing, and mental [and emotional] unsteadiness are obstacles to the practice of yoga.

When behaviors and conditions that interfere with endeavors to accomplish purposes are absent, orderly progress to the stage of successful accomplishment of those purposes can be rapid.

The ultimate aim of yoga practice is the uniting of the energy (shakti) of kundalini flowing upwards from the base of the spine with pure consciousness (shiva) at the crown chakra. Prior to this, life force (prana) flowing in the left (moon, lunar) channel along the left side of the spine and in the right (sun, solar) channel is encouraged to flow in the central pathway (sushumna,

"the radiant path"). This is accomplished by attentive practice of pranayama, mudras, and meditative concentration. Harmonious interactions between the left and right hemispheres of the brain then occur. The body becomes relaxed, mental processes are pacified, emotions become tranquil, and meditation can more easily be practiced.

16-a.Enthusiasm, perseverance, discrimination, unshakable faith, courage, and avoiding the company of self-centered people bring success in the practice of yoga.

Enthusiasm (Latin en-, in+ theos, God) is a Self-generated and Self-energized inclination to learn, experience, grow, act, and accomplish. With a strong will to live and prevail, we are naturally enthusiastic.

To persevere is to never give up when a goal is worthy of us and worthy of being attained. By right self-endeavor and God's grace, success on the spiritual path is assured.

By improving powers of discriminative intelligence we can easily discern the difference between truth and untruth, and between our pure-conscious essence of being and ordinary states of awareness.

Faith (confident belief in the truth, value, or trustworthiness of a person, idea, or thing) enables us to effectively act when actions are required and to patiently wait when waiting is necessary. Those who practice yoga should have faith in God, faith in the teaching, faith in their teacher, and faith in themselves.

Courage (literally Self-empowerment from the heart or core of our being) enables us to boldly yet wisely confront circumstances that need to be confronted. To succeed on the spiritual path we need to honestly and insightfully examine our thoughts, feelings, behaviors, relationships, circumstances, motives, and goals, and make rational choices and perform appropriate, right actions.

When possible, friends and associates whose character and qualities are ideal should be preferred. When it is necessary to interact with people who are self-centered, confused, or spiritually unaware (and it often is), our Self-aware behavior should be considerate, appropriate, and of brief duration.

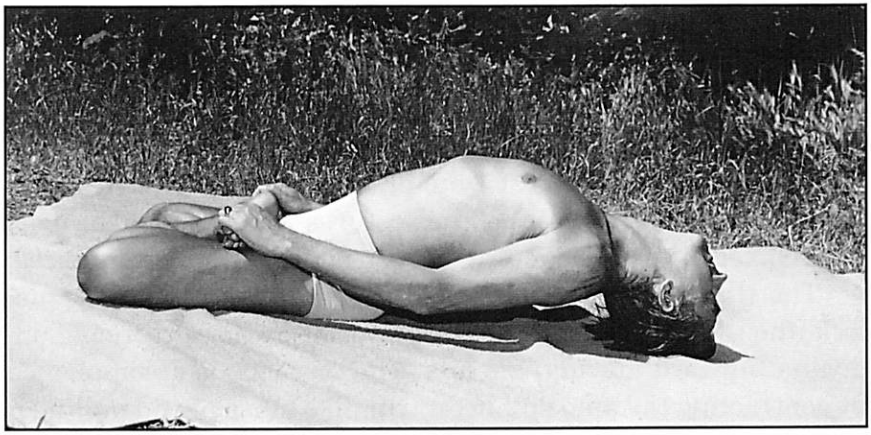
16-b.Harmlessness, truthfulness, honesty, continence [avoiding actions which waste vital forces while being absorbed in pure consciousness], forgiveness, endurance, compassion, humility, a moderate diet, and cleanliness are the ten rules of personal conduct.

16-c.Austerity, contentment, faith in God, charity, worship of God, listening to recitations of sacred scriptures, intellectual discernment, practice of mantra, and sacrifice are the ten observances.

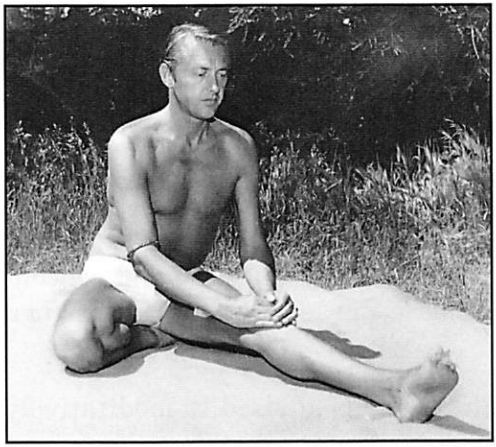
Some of these guidelines are set forth and elaborated upon in chapter two of Patanjali's Yoga-Sutras. An austere life is simple, focused, and disciplined. By patient practice, Self-contentment can be maintained in all circumstances. Faith in God empowers us and makes us receptive to grace. Charity is compassionate sharing with others in accord with their needs and our capacity to freely give. To worship God is to reverently acknowledge God until the ego is so purified that God alone is perceived and experienced as the only reality. Listening to truth-impregnated words of scriptures (or reading or contemplating them) nourishes the mind with sattwic influences, provides useful knowledge, and awakens dormant soul memories of the facts of life. A meditation mantra which attracts our attention and is pleasant to use is an aid to concentration. Sacrifice is freely giving up mental attitudes, thoughts, feelings (emotions), behaviors, and relationships which are not supportive of our aspiration to be Self- and God-realized.

17.Prior to other practices, learning the asanas [postures] is the first part of Hatha Yoga. By practice of asanas [and other procedures], one acquires steadiness of body and mind, freedom from disease, and flexibility of the [joints and] limbs of the body.

Hatha Yoga practices include physical purification processes, postures (asanas), techniques (mudras) for awakening vital forces, and pranayama. These strengthen the body, improve circulation of blood and lymph, stimulate hormonal secretions, awaken vital forces (kundalini energies), and prepare the practitioner for meditative contemplation. When the body is healthy and the nervous system is refined, soul forces can more easily express through them.



Above: Matsyasana (Fish pose)
Below left: Mahamudra starting position
Below right: Uddiyana Bhanda
(Photos, mid-1970s Roy Eugene Davis)



18.–55.[Seventeen Hatha Yoga postures (asanas), which are considered to be the most useful, and variations of some of them, are described.]

When Hatha Yoga routines are practiced skillfully and appropriately (within one's capacity to practice), tiredness will not be experienced. After practice of the postures (which should be done in a relaxed, meditative mood), other techniques can be practiced.

The three basic *bhandas* are the root (at the base of spine) lock, the throat lock, and the one performed when practicing uddiyana (upward moving) bhanda. The root lock is accomplished by contracting the anal sphincter (ringlike muscle) and pulling it slightly upward. Kriya Yoga initiates may do this when practicing mahamudra or the alternative technique which can be used prior to practice of kriya pranayama. This practice encourages life force in the lower chakras to flow up through the sushumna. The throat lock is accomplished by dropping the chin down on the upper chest to prevent air from entering or leaving the trachea. This may be done when practicing mahamudra or to restrain the breath when practicing certain pranayamas. Uddiyana bhanda is performed by lifting the abdominal cavity to elicit an upward movement of life force in the spine. All of the Hatha Yoga routines, and especially the mudras and pranayamas, improve the flow of life force through their respective channels (nadis).

56. Asanas, kumbhaka [breath retention], mudras, and concentration on inner sound comprise the sequence of Hatha Yoga practice.

After practicing a hatha routine, one is advised to meditatively contemplate the inner sound that spontaneously manifests and to consider it to be an aspect of Om, the power of Consciousness.

57. One who is a brahmachari, takes moderate and pure food, is regular and intentional in yoga practice, and renounces attachments to sense pleasures, becomes accomplished in one year.

Brahmacharya (brahma, pure consciousness; charya, conduct) that frees one from the bondage of conditioned behaviors enables a devotee to quickly awaken to Self- and God-realization; if not in

"one year," then much sooner than it would otherwise be accomplished. Patanjali defined yoga as "samadhi," conscious unification of individualized awareness with the one field of pure Consciousness. The highest form of yoga practice is superconsciousness.

58. Sattwic (agreeable and sweet) foods should be taken as an offering to supreme Consciousness, leaving one fourth of the stomach free.
59. Prohibited foods are those which are bitter, sour, salty, pungent, heating, [some] green vegetables, oil, sesame and mustard, alcohol, fish, flesh, curds, buttermilk, asafoetida, and garlic.
60. Unhealthy foods should be avoided: those which are reheated, dry, salty, acidic, stale, or are too varied [at one time].
61. Excessive heat [or cold], inappropriate companionship, and long trips should be avoided, as should any action or inaction which cause bodily discomfort.
62. The ideal foods for the yogi are good grains, honey, dry ginger, certain vegetables, mung [and similar] beans, and pure water.
63. The yogi should take nourishing and sweet food with ghee and milk. Food choices should nourish the tissues of the body and be pleasing and suitable.

Moderation in eating allows food transformation (the seven stages of which are plasma, blood, muscle, fat, bone, bone marrow and nerve tissues, and reproductive essences) to occur more easily. According to Ayurvedic theory, sweet (not necessarily sweet to the sense of taste, but having a sweet post-digestive effect) is most nourishing. Cooked food that has been allowed to cool down to room temperature for a few hours and is then reheated, may contain harmful bacteria. A well-balanced diet provides all of the six tastes: sweet, sour, salty, pungent, bitter, and astringent. What is advised in the text is to avoid extreme or excessively strong tastes. Milk need not be used if it cannot be easily digested or if one chooses not to include it in the diet. The most useful guideline is to select foods for their nourishing effects.

64. Whether young or old, sick or feeble, one can be accomplished in all of the yogas by right practice.

Regardless of the calendar age or physical condition when one starts to practice yoga—attentive, right participation will result in success. Because the true Self is immortal, pure consciousness, it need not be limited by relative circumstances.

65. Perfection [accomplishment] results from practical application. Perfection cannot be accomplished by only reading the scriptures.

The right performance of actions (Kriya Yoga) which produce the desired results is the proven way to spiritual fulfillment.

66. Neither by wearing the garb of a siddha, nor by talking about that ideal state, is perfection accomplished. One becomes a siddha only by practical application [of yoga practices]. This is the actual truth.

The Sanskrit word siddha is used to describe a person who has "accomplished" the aim of yoga practice: spiritual enlightenment. In India and other parts of Asia it is common to see a member of a monastic order dressed in an ochre (for hindu swamis) or yellow (for buddhist monks) robe. Other body adornments may include prayer beads or bracelets. Some Western practitioners of yoga (and other spiritual disciplines) also wear unique items of clothing to indicate their dedication to the spiritual path or to impress others. The author of *Hatha Yoga Pradipika* informs readers that what they do, and accomplish, is more important than external appearances.

Kriya Yoga Philosophy, Traditions, and Practices

Send questions or inquiries for possible use in a future issue by mail or e-mail ron@csa-davis.org

For several weeks after being initiated I was able to experience superconscious states when meditating. Now, I am seldom able to do so. Do you have any comments regarding this?

It is common for exceptional meditation perceptions to be experienced during the early stages of practice when interest is at a high level and a new rush of enthusiasm temporarily overwhelms and subdues subliminal tendencies. After a few weeks, or months, when one settles down and endeavors to integrate spiritual practices with daily duties and interactions with others, subliminal tendencies again become influential and attention wavers. With continued, patient practice, you will eventually be able to elicit superconscious states at will. There will also be a more obvious expansion of awareness which will enable you to comprehend the reality and depths of the wholeness of Consciousness. You are eternally in God. The unveiling of your intuition and clarification of awareness that allows this fact to be realized will progressively occur as you persist with your studies and spiritual practices.

Several of my brother disciples, whom I knew in the early 1950s, who experienced quick and sometimes dramatic results during the first several months of meditation practice, lost interest in the spiritual path or were distracted from it because of their lack of devotional ardor and self-discipline.

Have you chosen anyone to succeed you as a Kriya Yoga guru?

There are a few disciples in the United States and Europe who have been given permission to initiate on my behalf. Beyond that, I have not made any decisions in regard to successors. The right choices will be made when the times are right. Providence (divine direction) will ensure that ideal arrangements are made for the continued transmission of this Kriya Yoga tradition. Wanting to represent this tradition is not useful. What is required is

humble willingness demonstrated by dedication to right living and spiritual practice.

Is it necessary to live near a guru to have an attunement with him or her? How do gurus attune themselves with us? Is physical contact necessary to transmit grace?

The most beneficial attunement is with God. Attunement with a guru's awareness is only a point of contact with God; physical proximity is not necessary. Nor is physical contact necessary for the transmission of blessings. A guru may establish a mental and spiritual connection with receptive disciples by thinking of them.

Have you considered reprinting some of your older books?

My currently available books represent what I want to communicate. We occasionally receive inquiries about out of print titles. The basic information in my earlier books is also in my current ones. *Seven Lessons in Conscious Living*: a comprehensive course in higher learning and spiritual practice in the Kriya Yoga tradition (revised edition 2013), contains much useful information and many quotations from the writings and teachings of the gurus of this Kriya Yoga tradition.

[A reprint of Roy Eugene Davis' commentary on Patanjali's Yoga Sutras, *The Science of Self-Realization* is being prepared and will be available in February 2020. See back cover this issue for details.]

When practicing yoni mudra, at which chakra should one concentrate attention when mentally chanting Om: the spiritual eye or the crown chakra?

In yoga texts, the supplemental meditation technique used after kriya pranayama practice is usually referred to as *yoni* (the pathway through which one is born) *mudra* (in this instance, a method of regulating flows of life force). Some yogis refer to it as *jyoti* (light) contemplation. It is practiced by drawing a current of life force upwards through the spine to the brain when inhaling, restraining the breath (not with force or strain), and mentally chanting Om while gazing into the spiritual eye between the eyebrows. Awareness is usually in the higher brain; attention

is directed to the spiritual eye center. When it is necessary to resume breathing, one is advised to continue to gaze into the spiritual eye, exhale, let the breathing rhythm be restored to its normal flow, then repeat the process. This can be done two or three times. After doing the technique, disregard the breath and remain focused at the spiritual eye. Continue to mentally chant Om for a while, then listen to Om and merge awareness in it.

Does the ability to look into the future to determine the number of years one has left in this incarnation come with Self-realization? Are there ways to develop that ability?

When one is Self-realized (and before), glimpses of future possibilities can be perceived. The time of transition from the body is not predetermined. A variety of factors can be involved: karmic predisposition; genetic influences; the will to live versus the inclination to die; behaviors which contribute to health or to illness; and lifestyle circumstances, whether life-supportive or life-threatening.

Healthy, long physical life has value because it enables us to accomplish our purposes while we are alert and functional. Premature death of the body is a nuisance (a bothersome inconvenience) that interferes with our innate urge to live consciously and purposefully. For the average person who is only partially aware, incidents of physical death (and possibly rebirth) are of little consequence; their awareness is dreamlike. For one who aspires to illumination of consciousness, transition from the body when work in this realm is completed is viewed as an interesting learning experience. Many yogis leave the body too soon because of neglecting to use the life-knowledge they have to maintain their health or because of disinterest.

Even when indications of possible physical demise are observed, new causes may be implemented to neutralize the effects of past actions and extend the duration of life in this realm. The best preparation for eventual transition from the body is right living and superconscious meditation practice. It is also helpful to understand that, until we awaken from all involvements with relative phenomena, we live in eternity.

***New* Soft Cover Edition**
Available February 15, 2020

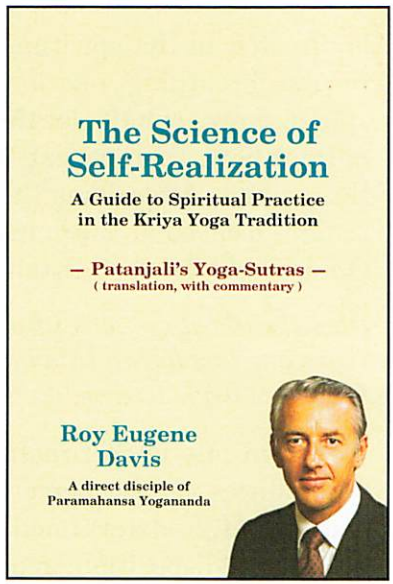
For Dedicated Truth Seekers

The Science of Self-Realization

Patanjali's Yoga-Sutras

Trade Paper 144 pages $8.00
U.S. postage $3.00
Outside the U.S. $6.00

CSA Press
PO Box 7 Lakemont GA 30552
online: www.csa-davis.org
info@csa-davis.org
706-782-4723 weekdays


The Science of Self-Realization
A Guide to Spiritual Practice in the Kriya Yoga Tradition
– Patanjali's Yoga-Sutras –
(translation, with commentary)
Roy Eugene Davis
A direct disciple of Paramahansa Yogananda

Part One: Patanjali's Yoga-Sutras

Kriya Yoga (disciplined thinking and actions, profound Self-inquiry, and transcending a mistaken sense of self) is taught as a way to weaken and remove conditions that interfere with spiritual awakening and Self-realization. Meditation practices, exceptional powers of perception and extraordinary abilities to be used to nurture spiritual awakening, superconscious states, and stages of awakening to spiritual enlightenment and liberation of consciousness are explained.

sutras— "threads," Sanskrit verb root *siv*, "to sew." Aphorisms, concise statements that may require a commentary of explanation. Patanjali's text was composed two thousand years ago.

Part Two: Shandilya Upanishad

A little known text on Kriya Yoga practices. The inner meaning of the *Bhagavad Gita* is also clearly explained.

Part Three

Meditation Techniques & Routines for All Levels of Practice

As an E-book at Amazon.com and Apple

Italian language edition in Europe: www.marcovalerio.it
Turkish language edition: turkish.csa-davis.org/?q=books